



PROCEEDINGS OF THE XI INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF EGYPTOLOGISTS

Florence, Italy 23-30 August 2015

MUSEO EGIZIO FIRENZE
Florence Egyptian Museum

edited by
Gloria Rosati and Maria Cristina Guidotti



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MUSEO EGIZIO FIRENZE
FLORENCE EGYPTIAN MUSEUM



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Chapel of the tomb belonging to Amenhotep III's Vizier, Amenhotep Huy. Asasif Tomb No. 28, Luxor-West Bank. Excavation results: 'Vizier Amenhotep Huy Project' (2009–2014)

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Abstract

Since 2009 the *Instituto de Estudios del Antiguo Egipto* (Madrid) has been working on the 'Vizier Amenhotep Huy Project, Tomb 28' in Asasif. During the excavation works it became apparent that the tomb was unfinished. The works were interrupted suddenly, at an unknown moment, between years 30 and 35 of Amenhotep III's reign. We have found many fragments from the original decoration of the 'Chapel', and a series of remains of shafts belonging to four columns (closed papyriform style), with the names of Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV inside their respective cartouches. These columns are consecutive (two by two). The excavation of the chapel tomb was undertaken in six seasons, from 2009 to 2014.

Keywords

Amenhotep III; Amenhotep IV; Amenhotep-Huy (Vizier); Asasif; coregency

Two years ago we published an article (Martin-Valentin and Bedman 2014: 17–27) as a fast communication for the scientific community about the discovery of some shaft fragments belonging to four columns that preserved remains of inscriptions; our intention was to make available to specialists as soon as possible the basic data that would enable the analysis and possible significance of this discovery to begin, and throw new light on a possibly lengthy coregency of at least eight/nine years between Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV.

The last public communication of our discovery, as well as some of the conclusions that, in our opinion, could be deduced from it, was on 28 August 2015, at the *International Congress of Egyptologists XI*, in Florence.

Meanwhile our work at the tomb of the Vizier (seasons 2014–2015) has continued, contributing new complementary data that, in our opinion, reinforces the value of this discovery in both archaeological and historical contexts.

A fact that we consider to be important in relation to the new discovery is that, throughout seasons 2014–2015, our team has successfully rebuilt the four columns (AIII.1, AIV.1, AIII.2, AIV.2) and restored the unearthed inscriptions, now inserted in the shafts, making detailed epigraphic study easier.

Asasif Tomb 28

Tomb 28 at Asasif (Eigner 1983; Gordon 1983), as catalogued by Friederike Kampp (Kampp 1986: 637–8, fig. 533), is located in the Theban necropolis in the northern area of Asasif, in front of and below the 11th Dynasty tomb of Djar (TT366) and adjacent to the 18th Dynasty tomb of Kheruef (TT192) (Eigner 1984: 3–4).

In May 1978, Andrew Gordon (University of California, Berkeley) and Diethelm Eigner identified the tomb as belonging to the 18th Dynasty. Its owner was the Vizier Amenhotep, called Huy, who held this position during the reign of Amenhotep III (c.1390–1352 BC). The exploration carried out by both researchers revealed that the monument was unfinished and very damaged (Gordon 1983: 72).

This tomb had not previously been excavated before we began our work at this site. The tomb belongs to the type built in the Theban necropolis during the reigns of Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV. The general characteristics of these T-shaped tombs are: a courtyard and very spacious chapel/hall, whose ceiling is supported by a large number of columns or pillars; a longitudinal hall that in some cases contains pillars or



FIGURE 1: TOMB 28 AT ASASIF (PHOTO: T. BEDMAN © I.E.A.E.).

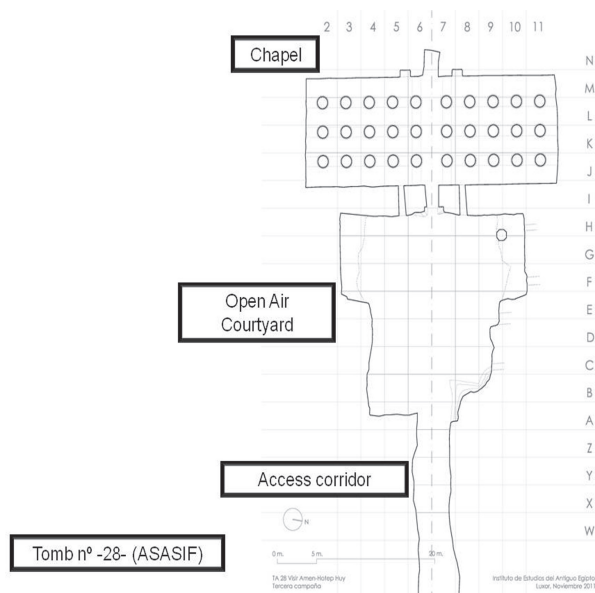


FIGURE 2: PLAN OF TOMB 28 AT ASASIF (DRAWING: JUAN MARTIN ROJO AND SERGIO ALARCÓN © I.E.A.E.).

columns; a ramp with several changes of direction leading to a form of tripartite Chapel, and beyond to the burial chamber. The monument includes an outer courtyard, with an area of 418,879m², and the north and south walls were limited by columns. Currently only two of these remain, both carved in the rock and unfinished. On the west facade of the courtyard there are three hollow spaces, two of which are windows; the central one is the entrance to the chapel, which has an area of 372,758m².

The entrance is in a carved out area in the rock mass, intended to be the original door leading to two rows of columns. On both sides, north and south of the entrance, there are two niches, probably intended for statues of the deceased.

The Chapel was originally equipped with three rows of ten columns each, 30 in total, apparently all of closed, papyriform style. Only two of them still stand, seriously damaged, while fragments of the others among the debris cover the floor of the chamber to a depth of several meters. They were destroyed either completely or up to half the height of the shaft. The chapel is wider than that of TT192, belonging to Queen Tiye's steward, Kheruef, which is located practically adjacent to Asasif Tomb 28.

We have found evidence of decoration (reliefs and painted designs) on the central passageway of the chapel, from the main entrance (external and internal walls) as far as the unfinished door in the chapel's west wall, and also on the ceiling.

Originally there were only four columns decorated with inscriptions (currently numbered K-6, J-6, K-7 and J-7, now AIII.1, AIV.1, AIII.2 and AIV.2). The other 26 columns have been partially sculpted at different stages, working from the central way towards the north and south of the chapel respectively.

The artistic style of the reliefs in Tomb 28 is connected with the style of the reliefs of the earliest part of the reign of Amenhotep III. This style is rather more archaistic than

that of the reliefs in TT55 (Ramose), although it is clear that both works were undertaken by the same craftsmen (Martin-Valentin and Bedman 2011: 52). These considerations of the artistic style of the reliefs suggest a dating for the beginning of the decoration of the tomb of the Vizier Amenhotep Huy immediately prior to the celebration of the first *Heb-Sed* of Amenhotep III, in year 30 of his reign.

However, here is a strong evidence that work at the tomb of the Vizier Amenhotep Huy was suddenly interrupted, and his images and hieroglyphic inscriptions were destroyed very soon after the artists working in the tomb had completed them.

The decoration of the chapel was never resumed after this interruption (Martin-Valentin and Bedman 2014: 23). All the fragments of reliefs and inscriptions discovered in the excavation were made of white limestone and were found in a wonderfully preserved condition, with no deterioration in the colour and as if they had just been finished. This indicates that the destruction of the reliefs happened practically at the same time as the downfall of the vizier himself.

The owner of the tomb: Vizier Amenhotep, called Huy

Only a few details related to the vizier were known before we started our excavations (Helck 1975: 222; Martin-Valentin and Bedman 2013: 181–5).

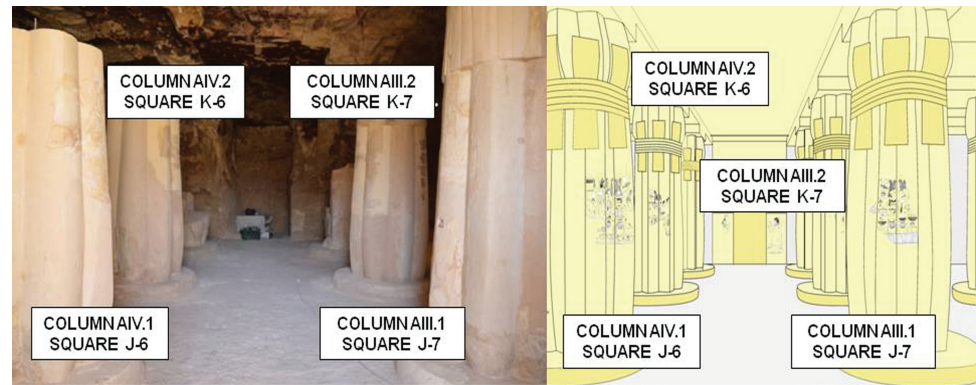
From the documents we know so far, we can say that Amenhotep, called Huy, was a courtier of king Amenhotep III; he held the position of Northern Vizier and, later, also that of Southern Vizier, in Thebes. The documents that we know correspond to regnal years 30, 31, and 35 of Amenhotep III.

This means, at least, that we know Amenhotep Huy served as vizier during these years. The subject to discuss and clarify is the sequence of events in Amenhotep's career. Did he begin directly as Vizier of the South in Thebes? Or, alternatively, did he originally serve as Northern Vizier and assume his position as Vizier of the South only after the disappearance of



FIGURE 3: PORTRAIT OF VIZIER AMENHOTEP HUY (RN 8108-13) (PHOTO: T. BEDMAN © I.E.A.E.).

FIGURE 4:
RECONSTRUCTION OF
THE COLUMNS IN THE
CENTRAL PASSAGEWAY
OF THE CHAPEL (PHOTO
T. BEDMAN; DRAWING:
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Ramose? From the results of our excavations at Asasif Tomb 28 we can now say that Amenhotep Huy and Ramose both held the office of Vizier of the South at the same time; one as vizier of Amenhotep III and the other as vizier of Amenhotep IV. After regnal year 35 of Amenhotep III the reputation of the vizier was attacked and his depictions and inscriptions destroyed. The latest known date for Amenhotep Huy is the first day of the first month of *Shemu*, in year 35 of Amenhotep III (Caminos 1987: 210 and note 1).

Excavation seasons 2009–2012

The excavations of Tomb 28 at Asasif began on 2 November 2009. During this first season it was decided to concentrate excavation works around the entrance to the chapel, in an approximate area of c. 90m². The objective was to find the threshold of the door in the bedrock. The findings included numerous remains of looting and destruction of other tombs sited in the courtyard of the main tomb during the Late Ramesside period and the Third Intermediate Period (c. 1090–715 BC). The same general area also yielded an ivory female figure, 14cm high (RN 514–09), nude, featuring a tripartite wig, painted eyes, and a sculpted necklace of shells (*Cypraea moneta*; cowrie) with the image of a cat, probably the goddess Bastet. This figure perhaps dates from the Third Intermediate Period (Martin-Valentin and Bedman 2013: 192–193, fig. 8). Numerous fragments of reliefs from the exterior facade of the chapel door were also found.

Some Coptic structures and many ceramic fragments of Ptolemaic and Roman times, completed the findings in the excavations near the chapel entrance. Finds of numerous ears, made of wood or pottery, which clearly did not belong to the destroyed coffins, are considered as votive offerings – ‘ears for prayer and request’ – deliberately deposited near the entrance to the vizier’s chapel. The excavations carried out in subsequent years show that the chapel was dedicated during the Third Intermediate Period. Later it became a site for the preparation of mummies, and the vizier was venerated here, as an intermediary before the god Osiris (Martin-Valentin and Bedman 2011: 53; 2013: 196–7). During seasons 2010, 2011 and 2012, many figures of ‘servers’ were found, as well as parts of a destroyed coffin belonging to a priest of Amon – (Pa) diirykhonsu, probably a relative of the pharaoh Osorkon I (924–889 BC) (Martin-Valentin and Bedman 2013: 193–194). In 2010 various fragments were found belonging to the shaft of column J-7 (currently AIII.1) (Martin-Valentin and Bedman 2011: 50).

On 11 December 2010 we found in the northern wall of the courtyard of Tomb 28 the entrance to a previously undiscovered tomb. This tomb, numbered FMTB-1, was documented during the 2014 season.

Excavation Season 2013

On 4 November 2013, in the central corridor of the chapel, c. +5cm from the ground, shaft fragments from three papyrus cluster columns were discovered. These fragments belong to the first and second columns in the first row, in the southern half of the colonnade of the chapel. The discovered fragments contained inscriptions showing clearly the praenomen and nomen of Amenhotep IV. A few days after the first discovery, and at the same level, c. +5cm above the ground, fragments were found of the shaft of the second column of the first row, in the northern half of the chapel colonnade. These fragments also contained inscriptions showing the praenomen of Amenhotep III and his nomen. Previously, in 2010–2011, several other fragments of reliefs belonging to the shaft of another column were uncovered, this time from the first column of the first row, in the northern half of the colonnade (Martin-Valentin and Bedman 2014: 19).

The inscriptions

We have discovered, therefore, the remains of four columns, all consecutive, two by two, with the names of father and son as crowned kings of Egypt. Both had been the Kings of Upper and Lower Egypt, at the same time, at least from two years before the first *Heb-Sed* of Amenhotep III. No other tomb in Thebes (except for Asasif Tomb 28, after the new discovery) has a representation of the names of the two kings, father and son, crowned at the same time, with the two names of the royal protocol (Son of Re and King of Upper and Lower Egypt) in the shafts of several columns, in the same space, one following the other, in two rows. The more relevant text can be found on column AIII.1, where Amenhotep III is styled ‘He who appears in the Tjentjat’, referring in a clear and indisputable way to the ceremony that had been an essential part of the first *Heb-Sed* festival of Amenhotep III.

This happened on the 27th of the second month of *Shemu* in year 30 of Amenhotep III (Epigraphic Survey 1980: Pls. 26, 28 and 42; Martin-Valentin and Bedman 2014: 22–7).

Inscriptions (Translation):

Amenhotep III. Column No. 1

1. Son of Re. (He who) appears in the Tjentjat. Lord of the Two Lands
2. Amenhotep Ruler of Thebes
3. [...]
4. King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Ruler of the Nine Bows, Lord of the Crowns

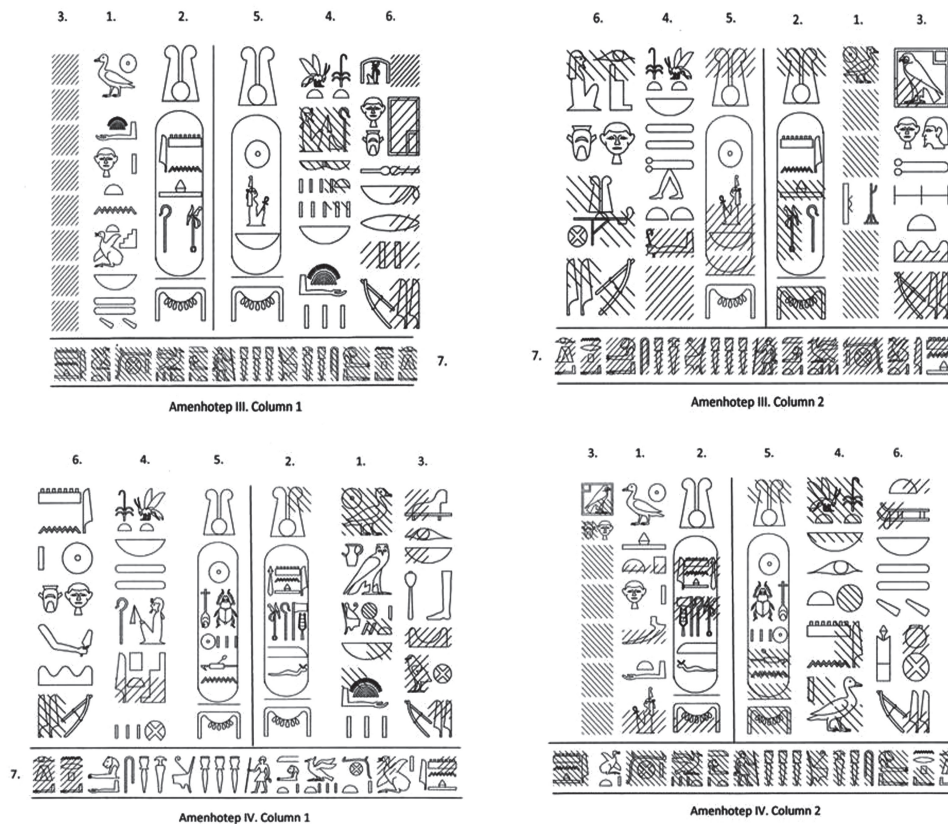


FIGURE 5: THE
INSCRIPTIONS ON THE
FOUR COLUMNS
(© I.E.A.E.).

5. Nebmaatre
6. Beloved of Ptah who resides [in the temple] of Sokar
7. [Made under the orders of the Hereditary Nobleman, the Prince, the First Friend among (the Royal) Friends, (The One Who is) at the head of Royal Subjects, the Governor of Thebes, the Vizier Amenhotep]

Amenhotep IV. Column No. 1

1. [Son of Re]. He who unites the Two Crowns, Lord of the Crowns
2. Amenhotep Divine Ruler of Thebes, Great in his Lifetime
3. Beloved of Osiris, Lord of Abydos
4. King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands. Ruler of Ipet-Sut
5. Neferkheperure Waenre
6. [Beloved] of Amen-Re who resides in the necropolis
7. [Made under the orders of the Hereditary Nobleman], the Prince, the First Friend among (the Royal) Friends, (One Who is) at the head of Royal Subjects, the Governor of Thebes, the Vizier Amenhotep

Amenhotep III. Column No. 2

1. [Son of Re]. [He who] takes (the Crowns).....
2. Amen[hotep] Ruler [of Thebes]
3. Beloved of Hathor, who presides the necropolis
4. King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands. (He who) [takes] possession of [the Two Crowns]
5. [Neb]maatre
6. Beloved of Osiris who resides in Abydos
7. [Made under the orders of the Hereditary Nobleman], the Prince, the First Friend among (the Royal)

Friends, (One Who is) at the head of Royal Subjects, the Governor of Thebes, the Vizier Amen]hotep

Amenhotep IV. Column No. 2

1. Son of Re (He who is) good over Maat
2. [Amen]hotep [Divine Ruler of Thebes], Great in his Lifetime
3. Beloved of Hathor, who [resides in the necropolis]
4. King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Rites, Son of [A]men
5. Neferkheperure [Wa]enre
6. Beloved of [A]tum the Lord of the Two Lands (and) Iu[nu]
7. [Made un]der the orders of the Hereditary [Nobleman, the Prince, the First Friend among (the Royal) Friends, (One Who is) at the head of Royal Subjects, the Governor of Thebes], the Vizier [Amenhotep]

After the restoration of the inscriptions in their shafts, we discovered relevant information during the epigraphic study of the columns in line No. 7. of the four sets of texts. Deliberately erased in the past on the four shafts of the columns, we have deciphered line 7 of the texts on every one of them by means of comparative studies of graphic documentation with macro photography. The inscriptions say that the Vizier Amenhotep Huy was the direct author and responsible for the inscriptions carved on the four columns: 'Made under the orders of the Hereditary Nobleman, the Prince, the First Friend among (the Royal) Friends, (One who is) at the head of Royal Subjects, the Governor of Thebes, the Vizier Amenhotep'.

This confirms that all the above-mentioned inscriptions were carved at the same time and, therefore, that they are chronologically placed *circa* the year 30 of Amenhotep III.

In conclusion, we may claim to have:

1. A clear fact: The protocol of the two Kings as rulers of Upper and Lower Egypt.
2. A chronological fixed point: Day 27 of the second month of *Shemu* in the year 30 of Amenhotep III.
3. A precise location: The Chapel of the Tomb of the Vizier Amenhotep Huy.

This discovery may represent, as we believe, very solid evidence of the long coregency between Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV. This is shown by the presence of inscriptions dated exactly at the beginning of the first *Heb-Sed* of Amenhotep III, in year 30 of his reign, all of in the same location, sculpted at the same moment, with no archaeological evidence of later interventions in the decoration of the monument.

The new data

Fragment from the corner of the unfinished gate in the west wall of the chapel (RN 8108-13)

We have already mentioned in our article (Martin-Valentin and Bedman 2014) the archaeological find (3 November 2013), while excavating in square K-6 (+10cm from the bedrock), the finding of a series of fragments with hieroglyphic inscriptions belonging to shafts of columns from the chapel. In the same square and at the same level we also discovered a fragment of the corner of the unfinished door in the west wall of the chapel, containing on one side part of the representation of the vizier, and on the other a fragment of hieroglyphic text registered in columns, of which only one was preserved, which we consider highly enlightening in terms of understanding the chronology of the chapel's decoration (See Figures 3 and 6, a).

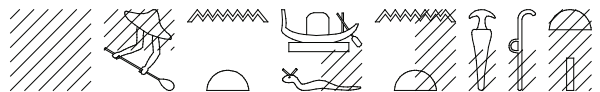
Bearing in mind the height of the find place, and its proximity to the unfinished west door of the chapel, we can understand that the relief must have been destroyed at some unspecified point after day 6 of the fourth month of *Akhet*, of year 31 of Amenhotep III, the date of the inauguration of the funerary temple of Amenhotep, son of Hapu, where the vizier and his king were together for the inauguration of this funerary

foundation. This suggests, therefore, that at this moment the vizier had not yet fallen from favour and, consequently, his images and inscriptions had not yet been destroyed (Robichon and Varille 1936, Pl. 1; Stele BM 138).

The style of the relief showing the upper part of the body of the vizier (head and right shoulder) clearly belongs to the period immediately prior to year 30 of Amenhotep III, which would confirm the proposed chronological beginning of the construction of the tomb at a few years before the celebration of the first *Heb-Sed* of the Pharaoh, in year 30.

Moreover, the inscription is very explicit and confirms the chronological fixing point demanded by some researchers as absolute evidence of the framework of historical events in this case. The text in this relief makes clear reference to the 'navigation' celebrations for the beginning of the year (ascent to the throne) of Amenhotep III, a date which should also be that of the first *Heb-Sed* of the Pharaoh, in year 30 of his reign (Parker 1950: 61–2).

The inscription:



‘...[h]nt.f n(y)t tpy rnpt...’ ‘...his navigation in the beginning of the year...’

We have evidence, therefore, which shows clearly that all the decorative work in the chapel of Asasif Tomb 28 was undertaken for the first jubilee of the Pharaoh, to be held in year 30 of his reign.

A fragment of relief showing the back of the head of a King with the White Crown and a Menat at the back (RN 8191–13)

On 4 November 2013 we discovered this fragment of chapel decoration in square M-6, at +15cm above the bedrock. The bas-relief style is very similar to the existing remains on the southwest wall of the courtyard of TT192 (Kheruef), representing Amenhotep III wearing the ‘White Crown’ (Epigraphic Survey 1980: Pl. 42).

It must be admitted that this fragment is part of a scene that could probably be showing Amenhotep III in the celebration of ‘the navigation of the beginning of the year’ referred to in the inscription above.

Thus we have further evidence of reliefs of the decorated part of the chapel, with corresponding hieroglyphic texts that were executed in year 30 of the reign of Amenhotep III, on the occasion of his first *Heb-Sed*.

The parallel texts existing in the chapel of the Vizier Ramose in Sheikh Abd El-Gurnah (TT55)

On the north and south interior jambs of the gateway to the chapel of Vizier Amenhotep there are still the remains of decorations (reliefs and corresponding hieroglyphic texts) that show him making offerings to the four sons of Horus and the four goddesses associated with them. Specifically, on the northern jamb (lower register) there is the following inscription: *nwd.w n(y.w) is.wy* (‘Ointments of the Two Chambers’). This inscription, both in terms of its artistic

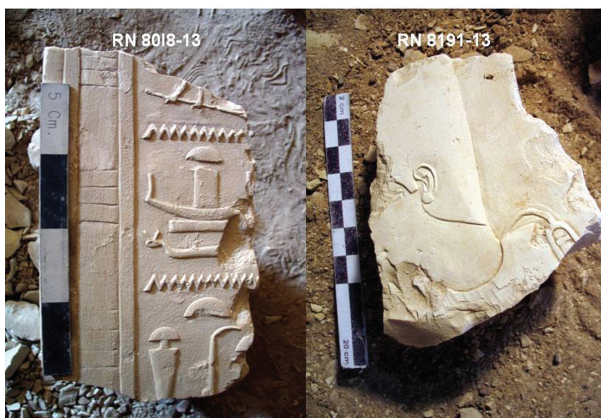


FIGURE 6: FRAGMENTS OF RELIEFS (RN 8018-13 AND 8191-13)
(PHOTO: FRANCISCO J. MARTÍN-VALENTÍN © I.E.A.E.).

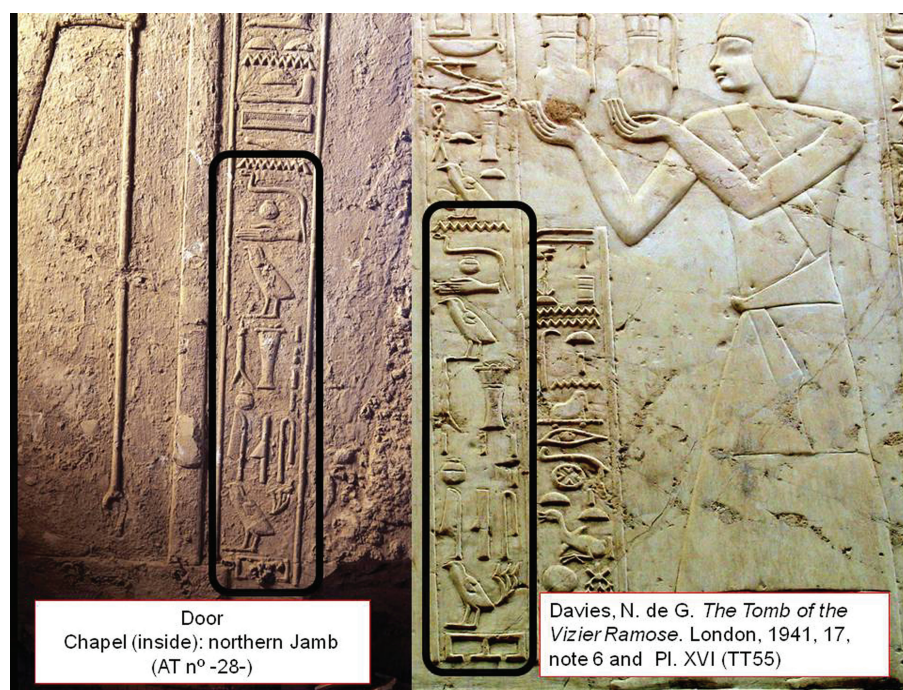


FIGURE 7: ORTHOGRAPHIC DEFAULTS IN AT28 AND TT55
(PHOTO: FRANCISCO J. MARTÍN-VALENTÍN © I.E.A.E.).

style and composition, is identical to several other scenes of offerings/bearers on the northern half of the east wall of the TT55 chapel belonging to the Vizier Ramose in Sheikh Abd El-Gurnah (Davies 1941: 17, note 6 and Pl. XVI). The main issue is that both inscriptions have been made by the same hand, as indicated by the spelling mistakes in the inscriptions, which are identical in the two tombs:

period' of Amenhotep IV, between years 1 and 5 of his reign, this leads us to accept that both tombs, that of Amenhotep Huy, Vizier of Amenhotep III, and that of Ramose, Vizier of Amenhotep IV, were made in a short (if not in the same) period of time between them. Therefore year 30 of Amenhotep III's reign should coincide with another, between 1 and 5, of the reign at Thebes of Amenhotep IV. This all forms strong

A') in the word *nwd.w*, 'ointments' (Wb II, 225, 1) the sign  is used (Gardiner I10) instead of the correct  (Gardiner U19).

B') in the word *is.wy*, 'two chambers' (Wb I, 127, 2-I) has the sign  (Gardiner Aa28) instead of the correct  (Gardiner M40).

It is very probable that the same draftsman, or 'Scribe of the Contours', drew these two inscriptions. In this case, we can conclude that these documents credited an undisputed *synchronism* in the decorations of the two two tombs, 28 at Asasif and 55 at Gurnah, i.e. that the same person/persons decorated both tombs, and, as no one disputes that TT55 was built during the so-called 'Theban



FIGURE 8: THE COFFIN OF THE 'SINGER OF AMON' IN THE BURIAL LOCATION (RN 9845-14) (PHOTO: T. BEDMAN © I.E.A.E.).

evidence for the existence of a long coregency between both sovereigns, father and son.

In the light of our new discoveries, we can claim that Amenhotep Huy was Vizier of the South, some time before year 30 of the reign of Amenhotep III. So far, the most likely hypothesis is that Amenhotep Huy would have replaced the high priest of Amun Ptahmose in the duties of Vizier of the South. He continued his functions as vizier, at least until year 35 of Amenhotep III (Caminos 1987: 210 and note 1; Martin-Valentin and Bedman 2011: 50–1). Whilst Amenhotep was Vizier of the South for the Pharaoh Amenhotep III, Ramose, another official from the North of Egypt, was also designated Vizier of the South, by the Pharaoh Amenhotep IV (coregent with his father). Thus, from some time before year 30 of Amenhotep III, there were two Viziers of the South, acting at the same time, each one for his king. There is no evidence that Ramose continued as Vizier of the South beyond year 31 of Amenhotep III, and certainly not after year 5 of Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten (Martin-Valentin and Bedman 2011: 51).

Excavation season 2014

The main objective of the 2014 season was to finish the excavations within the chapel and begin work in the courtyard of the tomb. After completing work on the chapel we began the work in the northern half of the courtyard of AT28. We reached +2.60m, over the bedrock and the threshold of tomb FMTB-1, discovered in 2010. The findings were few, and all of them the remains of looting to the secondary graves excavated into the walls of the main courtyard. On 13 November 2014, tomb FMTB-1 was officially opened to perform preliminary documentation. Work then moved to the area previously delimited as area B, next to the northern half of the facade of the chapel of AT28. In the northwest corner of the main courtyard we discovered a structure in mud-brick outside a new tomb; that had not been excavated before, and with an entrance from the north wall of the main courtyard. It has been numbered FMTB-2. In the same north wall of the main courtyard of the tomb, we closed and numbered two further entrances (FMTB-3 and FMTB-4).

We also discovered (1 December 2014) an intact burial, situated next to the wall of the facade of the chapel of AT28.

It was a wooden coffin, with yellow decoration, belonging to a female songstress of Amen, whose name could not be read, and with the intact mummy inside (RN 9845-14). The typology of the coffin clearly corresponds to type 'II' of Niwinski's classification (Niwinski 1988: figs. 25–6). It has been dated as belonging to the period between the 20th and 21st dynasties (c. 1090 BC).

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