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REDISCOVERING A LOST EXCAVATION:
THE KARNAK CACHETTE

EXCAVATION OF TOMB 28 IN THE ASASIF - 2010 SEASON AT KV63
THEODORE M. DAVIS & HIS EXCAVATORS - EGYPT IN MANTUA, ITALY
ORIGINS OF EGYPTIAN CIVILIZATION - & MORE
EXCAVATIONS IN TOMB 28 AT ASASIF, LUXOR WEST BANK
Belonging to Vizier Amenhotep called Huy

by Francisco J. Martín Valentin & Teresa Bedman

The Project Vizier Amenhotep Huy was begun in 2009 by a team from the Institute of Studies of Ancient Egypt, Madrid, Spain, under the direction of Francisco J. Martín Valentin and the co-management of Teresa Bedman. The project is supported by the
his tomb belongs to Vizier Amenhotep, called Hay, and it is located on the Luxor west bank, in the area known as the Asasif, in front of of Djeh’s Eleventh Dynasty tomb (TT366) and adjacent to the Eighteenth Dynasty Tomb of Khent-ape (TT192). In May 1978 Andrew Gordon (University of Berkeley, California) and the Austrian archi-
tect Dietlind Eigner identified this monument as Amenho-
tep-Huy’s, who held the administrative post of vizier during
the reign of Amenhotep III. Sited in the large concentra-
tions of limestone at Gurna and Asasif, it is of the type
which was heown in the Theban necropolis during the reigns
of Amenhotep III/Amenhotep IV.

From Year 28 (to Year 36 of the third Amenhotep, a


The large tomb-chapel of TT28 viewed from its south-
corner end, with several meters of rock debris covering the
floor. Only 2 of the original 30 rock-cut pillars partially survive.
great number of changes occurred in the noble's tombs at Thebes. These were designed with an enlargement of their chapels, as an architectural expression of the new State theology, the doctrine of the "Living Aten." They include a large courtyard, and a very spacious chapel, the ceiling of which is supported by numerous columns or pillars. Beyond the chapel there is another long room or hall which, in some cases, also has pillars or columns. We have also observed, in other tombs of the same period (i.e., TT55 and TT92), a ramp going down, with several changes of direction, ending at the burial chamber. Vizier Amenhotep-Huy's tomb may also possess such an access feature leading to a burial chamber, located at the bottom of the southwest corner of the chapel, although only future excavation will confirm this. Tomb 28 had never been excavated before our project began. Tomb 28's courtyard has an area of approximately 528 square meters. It is bordered on its northern and southern sides by columns carved out of the bedrock; only one remains and it was unfinished. There are three cavities in the west façade of the courtyard; two of them are windows, and the other is the entrance door to the "solar" chapel, which is an additional 381 square meters. This chapel had, when it was built, three rows of ten columns each; thirty in total, apparently all in the cistus-papyrus style. Today only two remain, both mostly destroyed; fragments of the others lie in the rock debris covering the chapel floor to a depth of several meters. The tomb is wider than that of neighboring TT102 (Kheruef was Great Royal Wife Thuya's steward).

It is clear that Tomb 28 was never finished, for, beyond the solar-cult chapel, it lacks the long hall and small end-room which would have held statues of the deceased and his family, and is usually seen in sepulchers of its type. On the other hand, none of the tombs from this period was formally completed; this fact would suggest a turbulent political and religious period, during which the circumstances of the tomb owners drastically changed.

The Tomb Owner

Vizier Amenhotep, called Huy, was an important nobleman of his time. Nonetheless, very few things are known about him. His documents and monuments are rare, in comparison to references of other elite persons of the same period. His memory seems to have been prescribed and his monuments destroyed.

Available documents relating to him are:

A) Two inscriptions on jars found at Malkata, with reference to the First Heb Sed of Amenhotep III (Year 30 of the reign). From these inscriptions it can be seen that Amenhotep-Huy was already vizier during the celebration of this initial jubilee of the king, although it cannot be determined if he was vizier of the South at Waset (Thebes) or vizier of the North at Memphis.²

B) A stele (BM 138), the text of which is dated the sixth day of the fourth month (Apoph) of Year 31 of Amenhotep III, recounts the act of founding the mortuary temple of Amenhotep, son of Hapu, an eminent nobleman in the reign, who was deified in the Late Period. This document mentions that Vizier Amenhotep-Huy was in the company...
of the king on that day. However, it is known that at that time the owner of TT53, Ramose, was vizier of the South and there is no mention that he was present at the foundation ceremony. Therefore, it seems clear that Amenhotep-Huy was not then the vizier for the South. A proposed hypothesis is that Ramose disappeared at the end of the foundation ceremony of Temple of Amenhotep, son of Hapu, and was inscribed. Amenhotep-Huy was most likely still the vizier of the North. An alternative hypothesis proposes that, in fact, Ramose was vizier of the North and his tomb at Gurnah (TT53) was a cenotaph built in the necropolis of Egypt's religious capital at that time.

There are remains of various monuments associated with Amenhotep-Huy — a chapel, two stelae and a shrine, with inscriptions — at the Gebel el-Silsila quarries. The chapel was hewn in the northern area of the quarries, somewhat to the east of the famous Amenhotep IV stela. Inside it another stela mentions the first day, season of Shemu, in the Year 35 of the king. The texts at these monuments in-
The only known surviving representation of the face of Vicer Amemhatpef-Ra, on a raised-relief fragment found in Tomb 28.
clude prayers of praise to Sobek, Amen-Re and the divine personality of Amenhotep III, as a powerful sovereign, who brings forth the Nile's floodwaters. Vizier Amenhotep-Huy is named along with the king, as his faithful servant, expecting to enjoy the royal favor, in return for his loyalty and services to the ruler.3

Vizier Amenhotep-Huy also was present at Gebel el Silsila in the Year 35 of the reign to organize the hewing of sandstone blocks from the quarries. These were required for the construction of the Theban temples of Amen (Sat Ipet and Ipet Reshat), which seems to have been continued in those last years of Amenhotep III's reign. It is to be presumed that the splendid royal mortuary temple of Amenhotep III — at modern-day Kom el Hettan on the Luxor west bank — was also under construction at that time.

The texts at all these monuments were mutilated, probably by the followers of Akhenaten. Everything seems to indicate that Vizier Amenhotep-Huy fell into disgrace, and his memory proscribed, culminating in the deletion of his name and his images from all monuments.

D) In Anansa Letter EA71, Prince Rib-Hadda, ally of the king Egypt, denounces the attacks of Prince Achi-Ashiria, ally of the Hittites, and complains that he has been abandoned to his fate, with no help from Egyptian troops.4 It has been accepted by scholars that the Egyptian nobleman, called Haya, to whom the letter was addressed by Rib-Hadda, is to be identified as Vizier Amenhotep-Huy. If that is the case, it seems that the vizier was commissioned by Amenhotep III to make an inspection tour of places of Egyptian influence in Syria, specifically at the coastal port afterwards known as Byblos.

E) Two statues of Amenhotep-Huy discovered in the Temple of Bastet at Bubastis by Edward Naville (CG 590 and BM 1068) suggest, for some investigators, that Amenhotep-Huy was sent there to inspect the work being done in that temple, during the occasion of the celebration of the First Heb-Sed in Year 30 — while he was en route to Byblos, to discover the political situation there.5 However, texts inscribed on the statue in Cairo (CG 590) — "Making laws, establishing the Maat, dictating instructions for the noble Prince, the beloved friend of his Lord, the director of all the works of his King in the name of Sobek in Lower Egypt, the depository of the seal of the King of the North, the Mayor, the Vizier Amenhotep, Lord of veneration" — and
on the second London Amenhotep-Huy statue (BM 10688) — "The nobleman who cares for the domains of the temples. The principal of Neben who comes in peace in the holy place. The Mayor, the Vizier Amenhotep back to live" — would make it seem that, at least at this time, Amenhotep was responsible only for the king's works in Lower Egypt. Both statues have been mutilated, with heads and hands broken off, which could mean that these sculptures were destroyed to proscribe the memory of Amenhotep-Huy, as was the case in other documents related to him.

F) At the Temple of Nebmaatre (Amenhotep III) at Soleb — in the northern half of the east portico of the temple's first courtyard — there is a relief scene representing the ceremony of the temple's consecration, with the opening of its doors. There are two men before the king, both shown in the attire and with the title of vizier. The name of the first of them has been erased, while the second is clearly readable: Ramose. On this basis, it has been proposed that Amenhotep-Huy's identity has been removed from the relief for the same reason cited above.

G) Although epigraphic work has not yet started, there are a number of hieroglyphic inscriptions in Tomb 28 that have been read already, revealing some of Amenhotep-Huy's titles. The central part of the chapel ceiling can be read: "The noble Prince, the beloved divine father, which is on the screen of the Royal Palace, the upper mouth of the gods on the Earth, until its ends. [The Priest] Sen. The Inspector of all the Seddyt shrines. Who is in the middle of the heart (the favorite). Who speaks in the solitude (the confidant)."

On the ceiling's north part: "The revered in front of Osiris, the Mayor of the city, the Vizier Amenhotep, justified words spoken by Netet the Great, [the Inferior Heaven]. The noble, the Prince... The mouth which does the peace on the Earth, until its limbs. The supervisor of the taxes of Upper and Lower Egypt. The Inspector of works in the great monuments. The director of the House of the Gold. He who gives instructions to the noblemen in the Court. Mayor of the city, the Vizier Amenhotep."

On the south part of the ceiling: "The revered in front of Osiris, the Mayor of the city, the Vizier Amenhotep, justified words spoken by Netet, the Superior Heaven, the Great Beneficient. Oh Osiris... of the good god for the Ka of the noble, the Prince, to whom the King of Lower Egypt makes excellent. One, whose place, it is made to prosper by the Lord of the Two Lands, ... by the Lord of the Two Lands, the Mayor the city, the Vizier Amenhotep..."

On the northern half of the east wall, next to the door can be read: "Kebhekenu to the Vizier. Words spoken by Khebheken: The union of the bones by Kebhekenu. The Vizier to Kebhekenu: Give oil of cedar and prepared oil [of plant] [...]."

On the southern half of the east wall, next to the door is: "The Goddess Neith to the Vizier: Words spoken by Neith: [...]."

Conclusions

In view of the preceding documents, it seems evident that Amenhotep, called Huy, was a curiatur of the Amenhotep III, whom he served as vizier, first in Lower Egypt, then possibly assuming the responsibilities of vizier of the South. The known documents are from the years 30, 31 and 33 of Amenhotep III. At the very least, this means that Amenhotep-Huy was vizier from the third Amenhotep's Year 30 until the Year 35.

The issue to discuss and clarify is: what was the sequence of events in the cursus honorum of Amenhotep-Huy? Was he, from the beginning, the vizier of the South, with
residence in Waset (Thebes)? Or, alternatively, was he originally vizier of the North, and — after the disappearance of Ramose — subsequently vizier of the South, as well? Presently, in our opinion, the latter is the more plausible situation, and hopefully new data clarifying the situation awaits discovery in our excavations at Assus, Tomb 28.

Inscriptions on jars discovered in Malkata evidence the presence of Amenhotep, as vizier (they don’t tell us if of the South or North), during the First Heb-Set of Amenhotep III. On the other hand, it is perfectly logical and consistent that the vizier of the North should be present at these highly important ceremonies. Ramose was also present at the jubilee, as is recorded by his name inscribed on a jar also from Malkata. This evidence confirms the simultaneous presence of the viziers at both the inauguration of the temple of the king at Soleb and at the celebration of the First Heb-Set of Amenhotep III. It should be recognized that the position of Amenhotep ahead of Ramose in the Soleb scene probably was more of a matter of seniority in the vizier post, rather than a matter of protocol — which otherwise would have obliged the artist to represent the vizier of the South being followed by the vizier of the North.

On the other hand, we know that the high priest of Amen, Pihmose, was the immediate predecessor of Ramose and Amenhotep, in the duty of vizier. But, in his case, he held both northern and southern posts at the same time. For this reason, it is possible to think that, when Pihmose’s period as vizier came to an end, Ramose was chosen to occupy the post in the South and that Amenhotep was named vizier of the North.

The existence of two statues of Amenhotep-Huy in the Temple of Bastet, at Bubastis, found near the remains of another belonging to Khershef, steward of the Great Royal Wife, shows that the two men were close and that they made similar status offerings to the goddess Bastet’s temple on the occasion of the First Jubilee of Amenhotep III, at which time both took an active part in those ceremonies.

Indisputably, with these statues Amenhotep-Huy shows us himself as vizier, exercising that role in the North, and the titles contained in the inscriptions are typical for officials of the North and very similar to those used by other well-known courtiers of the North at that time. However, we have evidence that in the Year 31 Amenhotep appears at Waset as vizier, in conjunction with the founding of the mortuary temple of Amenhotep, son of Hapu. At that time Ramose was not recorded as present. So it must be assumed that between Amenhotep III’s Year 30 and the Year 31 Ramose was no longer vizier of the South, and that Amenhotep-Huy had already assumed that position.

There is another important document in the chapel of the Tomb of Ramose at Gurna (TT55), that can prove this theory. On the southern wall’s lower register, there are some unfinished images representing four men dressed in the unique shemp garment of the vizier, whose location in this place, next to the entrance of the corridor leading to the burial chamber, has no easy explanation.10 Here an unnamed vizier presides over funerary offerings made by two priests at the entrance of the tomb while — in another of these representations — the one making offerings of bread and water is the vizier, himself. Due to the fact that the representations are unfinished and without inscriptions, there is no sure identification of who this man is. Logically he cannot be Ramose, whose much larger images are on the other walls in the chapel. The one who presides over and also presents the offerings at the entrance of Ramose’s tomb-chapel is a vizier — so these images possibly represent Amenhotep-Huy, who would have been the successor of Ramose, and so performing the functions of the vizier of the South.

From the texts inscribed at the quarries of Gebel el Silsila, it is known that Amenhotep-Huy continued to act as vizier of the South until Amenhotep III’s Year 35. Inasmuch as no one else is known to have held the title Vizier of the North during years 31-35 of the reign, it is probable that he also functioned in that capacity. It would have been during this period of four to five years that work on his own tomb at west of Waset, in the area of modern-day Aessim, was begun. As said the tomb was known adjacent to that of Khershef (TT192) and it appears to have been designed by the same architect. It also would seem that Khershef’s tomb was known some time before its neighbor.

After Year 35 nothing is known of Amenhotep-Huy. Consequently, his termination as vizier of both the North and South probably occurred at that time. We know that the next southern vizier was one Nakht, who resided at Akhetaten (Amarna),11 while an Aper-III was appointed as northern vizier, residing at Mennufer (Memphis). The latter exercised this function during the last two or three years of Amenhotep III’s reign.12

Considering the wholesale destruction of monuments and documents relating to Amenhotep-Huy, it may be assumed that a diastatic memoria was carried out by agents of Akhenaten. It also seems likely that the destruction of his name, titles and images was done after his dismissal and/or death. This implies that Amenhotep-Huy was possibly a strong opponent of Akhenaten’s newly introduced Aten theology. In fact, it is very notable that, until now, no representation of the face of Vizier Amenhotep-Huy, was known, owing to the complete mutilation of his monuments and inscriptions. The discovery of relief fragments near the southern jamb, on the doorway of his chapel, showing the face of the vizier, is a very important find. It is the first representation of the countenance of Amenhotep-Huy, with an accompanying inscription which clearly identifies him.13 There is a remarkably strong stylistic similarity between this image and that of the face of Amenhotep III, as depicted in paintings from his tomb (WV 22), that are now in the Louvre Museum.14

The interior decoration of the Tomb 28 chapel seems to exist only on both sides of the entrance, next to the doorway. The north and south faces of this wall are covered by a layer of soot that has separated an outer layer
of the stone from its original mass. The reliefs which seem to be under the soot are highly degraded and it will be very difficult to preserve them.

The doorway itself, unfortunately, was destroyed at the top, perhaps in the Coptic era. At the bottom, the stone is cracked; and large sections of decoration have been lost — they are, perhaps, among the remains of the rubble. In any case, enough has been found to be able to say that the style of the existing reliefs is similar to that of the Tomb of Ramose, and the composition of the hieroglyphic texts suggests that they were written by the same person(s) as those in the chapel of KV35. The remains of the decoration, which still exist on the walls of the chapel, discovered during the work carried out in the 2010 season, show us that the chosen topics are very traditional.

On the north side, the goddess Selket is represented, and in the upper register. Kebehsenuf, one of the four sons of Horus. In both cases, it is possible to see Amenhotep-Hay making offerings, although his image has been completely destroyed. On the southern part of the doorway the goddess Neith is represented; and, in the upper register, there are the remains of the figure of another of the four sons of Horus, probably Duamutef.

It can be deduced, therefore, that flanking the doorway there were representations of the four sons of Horus, and four goddesses associated with them. They are receiving
ointments and ritual oils, offered by Amenhotep-Huy. During the initial excavation work, it has been revealed that the tomb was clearly unfinished. The state of the decoration on the inner wall, beside the northern jamb of the door, indicates that work in the tomb was suddenly interrupted at an unknown moment between the years 30 and 35 of the reign of Amenhotep III.

After the "Amarna revolution," Tomb 28 was considered to be a holy place by people in the Ramesside period. Amenhotep-Huy was remembered as an important man who was persecuted by the followers of Atenism. Evidence of this has been found in a graffito showing a scribe of Amen worshiping Osiris, with the intermediation of a vizier. Discovered in the Tomb 28 courtyard, as well, were a large number of ears, used as votive offerings for the hearing of prayers.

All the finds indicate that the Tomb of Amenhotep-Huy was used, until the Late Period, as a special and sacred space to be buried. It has also been determined that the chapel functioned as a place for the preparation of mummies before they were interred in tombs excavated off the courtyard.

Our goal for the next seasons of excavation is to continue with the clearance work inside the chapel, so as to verify the possibility of an entrance to the burial chamber of the tomb. We would like to thank the Permanent SCA Committee — in the persons of Dr. Zahi Hawass, Mr. Sabry Abd el Aziz, Dr. Atteya Radwan, Dr. Mohamed Ibrahim, Mr. Mansour Boni, Mr. Mustapha el Wariz, Mr. Ibrahim Soliman, Mr. Noor Abd el Gafar Mohamed, Mr. Fathy Yazin Abd El Kortin and Mr. Ramadan Ahmed Ali — for support in the development and execution of the Amenhotep-Huy Project.

Notes
6. Naville, E., Thebes after the Amarna revolution (London, 1891), 31-33, PL XIII, XXXIV.
8. Hayes, W., no. 96.
12. Excavation Register, no. 590-0005-10.

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