

The Long Coregency Revisited: Architectural and Iconographic Conundra in the Tomb of Kheruef*

Peter F. Dorman

Oriental Institute, University of Chicago

A generation of young scholars has been introduced to the complex issue of Egyptian coregencies through Bill Murnane's seminal dissertation on the topic, published by the Oriental Institute in 1977. Of all the coregencies discussed by Murnane, none has been debated with more passion than the one alleged between Amenhotep III and his son. The long coregency of ten or eleven years is far more than a chronological quibble: it has serious implications for the structure of royal administration, the determination of foreign relations, the management of economic resources, the promulgation of art styles, the coexistence of apparently conflicting religious cults, and the reconstruction of the genealogy of the royal family at the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty. This present revisitation of a subject that Bill Murnane himself addressed several times is affectionately dedicated to his memory, in admiration of his scholarship and out of gratitude for his unfailing personal generosity—and with the hope that he would have found the argument of interest.

The Tomb of Kheruef in the Coregency Debate

Long one of the bones of contention around which the coregency debate has swirled, the tomb of Kheruef (TT 192) has never been considered to be the primary crux in the coregency controversy, but just one of a myriad pieces of evidence, thus far more or less inconclusive, brought forth to support or refute

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the possibility of joint rule.¹ Each of these fragments of the coregency puzzle tends to turn on a single question of interpretation, whether it be a reading of a regnal year, the juxtaposition of cartouches, or the significance of the presence, attire, or pose of various royal figures. Those readers familiar with the situation of Kheruef's tomb in the coregency debate, however, will recall the unusually rich variety of criteria offered by TT 192: to wit, the portrayals of both kings as well as Queen Tiye in various parts of the unfinished wall reliefs, the intact preservation of the early name of Amenhotep IV, and the depiction of certain dated events in two of the historic jubilees celebrated by the elder king. This fortuitous combination of personalities and criteria should, at first glance, serve to delimit certain datable parameters pertaining to the reigns of Amenhotep III and Akhenaton, according to which the phenomenon of joint rule might be persuasively demonstrated or definitively denied. Such has not proved to be the case: scholars on both sides of the argument have happily embraced the tomb of Kheruef to promote their own opinions while rarely convincing those whose views differ. The purpose of this article is not to revisit the entire question of the coregency, but only to examine the problem in light of the limited evidence incorporated in the tomb of Kheruef, through a chronological assessment that

¹ Certain pieces of evidence have been deemed more diagnostic or pertinent than others, but most have ultimately been judged inconclusive, like the tomb of Kheruef. Even the general amalgam of ambiguous data has been proposed as persuasive in itself; see F. Giles, *The Amarna Age: Egypt*. Australian Center for Egyptology Studies: 6 (Aris and Phillips: Warminster, 2001), pp. 55, 81, 252. The essential points of evidence have long been known and have been treated by D. Redford, *History and Chronology of the Eighteenth Dynasty of Egypt: Seven Studies* (University of Toronto: Toronto, 1967), pp. 88-169; W. Murnane, *Ancient Egyptian Coregencies*. SAOC 40 (University of Chicago, Chicago, 1977), pp. 123-69, 231-33; Giles, *Amarna Age: Egypt*, pp. 25-137; and M. Gabolde, *D'Akhenaton à Toutânkhamon*. Collection de l'Institut d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'antiquité, vol. 3 (Université Lumière-Lyon 2: Paris, 1998), pp. 62-98. The debate on these points cannot be addressed in full here. Two more criteria, brought into play recently, include a graffito found at Dahshur (see J. Allen, "Further Evidence for the Coregency of Amenhotep III and IV?" *GM* 140 [1994], pp. 7-8; and J. Allen, W. Murnane, and J. van Dijk, "Further Evidence for the Coregency of Amenhotep III and IV? Three Views on a Graffito Found at Dahshur," *Amarna Letters* 3 [1994], pp. 26-31, and especially p. 152), and a boat scene from the tomb of Maya at Amarna (Giles, *Amarna Age: Egypt*, pp. 78-79).

employs the deification iconography of Amenhotep III²—which adds a useful new dimension to the material from TT 192—the development of the didactic protocol of Ra-Horakhty-Aton, and the architecture of the tomb itself.

Even for the reign of Amenhotep III, the tomb is both impressive and unusual in its layout (fig. 1). Carved into the floor of the Asasif valley, Kheruef's monument is approached by a ramp descending into the earth and terminating in a doorway that gives access, by means of a short passageway, to a large open court measuring approximately 24 meters square and carved 5.5 meters below ground level. The court was to have been provided with columns on all sides, but these were only finished to varying degrees before the tomb was abandoned. At the center of the western portico, a second doorway leads into a pillared hall, then into an axial chamber and finally into the burial apartments, which were carved at much deeper levels. Few of these areas ever received their decoration before the tomb was abandoned: only the entrance doorway and its passageway; the walls of the western portico and its doorway and reveals; and two of the pillars of the columned hall, carved with vertical offering texts.

The most convenient starting point for Kheruef's tomb as it impinges on the coregency question is the masterful chapter by Donald Redford, who critiqued previous commentary on the tomb and presented a host of insightful observations, even at a time when the full publication of the monument was not yet available.³ At the time Redford was writing, two arguments using the tomb of Kheruef had been brought forth to support a long coregency. The first argument centered on a badly damaged relief carved into the south wall of the short passageway just inside the entrance door of the tomb, showing Amenhotep IV pouring a libation onto an offering stand before the figures of Amenhotep III and Queen Tiye, and on the question of whether all three persons were living at the time the wall was decorated (fig. 2). While several earlier scholars had considered this grouping to be purely a posthumous *hommage*, Fairman believed that Amenhotep III was depicted as both alive and deified, and that the scene in

² For these iconographic traits, see below, with note 19.

³ Redford, *History and Chronology*, pp. 113-17; the publication of the tomb appeared twelve years later: the Epigraphic Survey, *The Tomb of Kheruef: Theban Tomb 192*. OIP 102 (University of Chicago: Chicago, 1980).

Kheruef might be compared to reliefs at the Temple of Soleb in which Amenhotep IV makes offering to his still-living father, Nebmaatre, Lord of Nubia.⁴ On the other hand, Redford maintained that the costume, royal insignia, and the lack of a pedestal in the Kheruef scene are typical of similar representations of the deified Amenhotep I, and observed that the entire passageway of the tomb—including the adjacent depiction of Amenhotep IV reciting a hymn to the rising sun—is devoted to a context that is “timeless,” without reference to historical reality. But even more, “the essence of the offering ritual precludes that the recipient should be a living person.”⁵

The second argument hinged on the progress of tomb decoration, carefully set forth by Cyril Aldred.⁶ It has long been recognized that the decoration of Theban tombs was normally initiated before the excavation had been completed, with the draftsmen and painters set to work in the outer portions of the tomb before the stonemasons within had fully achieved their task of quarrying out the deepest extremities. If the same sequence holds true for TT 192, one would expect that the entrance of the tomb was the first section excavated and decorated, with the western side of the court following only later. Aldred remarked that when the entrance was adorned Amenhotep IV had already been crowned, but the historical first and third jubilees of Amenhotep III are depicted only further inside, in the western portico of the open court.⁷ He

⁴ H. W. Fairman, “The Inscriptions,” in *The City of Akhetaton, vol. 3*, EEM 44, ed. J. S. Pendlebury (Egypt Exploration Society: Oxford, 1951), pp. 155-56. The damage to the scene was sufficient at the time to lead Fairman to describe the figure of Amenhotep III as “seated,” when in fact all three figures are standing. See also the remarks, supportive of Fairman’s view, of C. Aldred, *Akhenaten, King of Egypt* (Thames and Hudson, London: 1988), pp. 174-75.

⁵ Redford, *History and Chronology*, p. 116. The debate over whether Amenhotep III was alive or dead when the scene was carved is only peripheral to the concerns of the present article: regardless of the validity of this observation, we shall proceed on the basis of other criteria.

⁶ C. Aldred, *Akhenaten, Pharaoh of Egypt: A New Study* (Thames and Hudson: London, 1968), pp. 107-09. Similar reasoning was put forward by F. Giles in his *Akhenaten: Legend and History* (Hutchinson: London, 1970), pp. 80-81, apparently following an independent train of thought, since he does not cite Aldred’s slightly earlier work. In his later study, *Akhenaten, King of Egypt*, Aldred does not discuss the reliefs of Kheruef in depth (see p. 92), stating simply that “their sequence and completeness are problematical” (p. 163).

⁷ Epigraphic Survey, *Kheruef*, pls. 24 and 47.

was thus led to conclude that the distribution of these scenes demonstrate that the son was already on the throne of Egypt, as a junior coregent, even before his father's jubilee of year 30 and thus before the death of his Amenhotep III, necessitating a long coregency. In responding to these arguments, Redford noted that Kheruef's tomb exhibits a number of anomalies in terms of its construction: not only does the carved decoration appear limited to the entrance areas and the western portico, but work seems to have been abandoned in all parts of the tomb at once. And since these areas had received their final painted coats—at least in part—he asserted that the draftsmen and stonemasons had not conformed to the expected progression of work exhibited in other Theban tombs (that is, east-to-west), but had been engaged in both inner and outer areas at the same time.⁸

In a review of Redford's book,⁹ Edward Wente professed himself "not quite prepared to endorse Redford's statement regarding the sequence of its decoration,"¹⁰ and provided a more nuanced description of the state of the tomb decoration. Specifically, he noted that the southern wing of the western portico (where the first jubilee is depicted) is architecturally less advanced than the entrance doorway and that the carving of the southernmost reliefs was never completely finished; by comparison, the northern wing (third jubilee) had been brought to completion and the upper portions painted as well. Wente also pointed out that the entrance doorway had been carved and painted, but that inside the passageway only the acrostic hymn had received its pigment, perhaps "because of the extremely delicately incised relief of the inner wall containing the scene of Amenhotep IV offering to his parents."¹¹ Nor did he entirely discount the east-to-west progression of construction. Wente further noted that one of Kheruef's titles, "Steward of the Estate of Amun," appears only in the pillared hall beyond the western portico, implying that it may have been an office conferred on him later in life, and that its occurrence only relatively deep within the tomb might reflect a chronological datum for tomb construction.¹²

⁸ Redford, *History and Chronology*, pp. 116-17.

⁹ E. Wente, in a review of Redford, *History and Chronology*, in *JNES* 28 (1969), pp. 273-80.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 275.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² For a cautionary remark, see C. Nims, in *Kheruef*, p 15, note 52.

William Murnane's later analysis of the work in Kheruef, in his monograph on Egyptian coregencies, conceded that it is possible that the progress of the decoration flowed from east to west, but if so, there must have been a significant chronological gap between the entrance doorway—which represents some of the earliest relief work executed under Amenhotep IV—and the western side of the open court, “since the portico is all of a piece and the events of the third jubilee are portrayed there.”¹³ Murnane estimated this lapse of time at “about ten years,” but did not otherwise believe the evidence to compel a decision either for or against a coregency.

In *The Amarna Age: Egypt*, Frederick J. Giles has recently returned to the substance of Aldred's (and his own) earlier position, reasserting that “the scenes of the first and third jubilees, dated to Amenhotep's Year 30 and 37 respectively, are within the tomb on the western wall of the forecourt, and therefore probably to be dated later than the scenes of Ikhnaton on the façade.”¹⁴ He quotes extensively from Wenté's careful remarks on the carving and painting of the Kheruef reliefs, which, although useful as clarification, in point of fact skirt the fundamental question of whether work in the tomb flowed strictly from east to west. Giles does accede to Murnane's deductions concerning a time lag before the jubilee scenes were carved, with one caveat: “the intervening period was long or short depending on whether the scenes in the first court were executed in one group, in or after Regnal Year 37, or in two groups, the first after Year 30, and the second group in Amenhotep III's last year.”¹⁵ Thus, he leaves open the question of whether each of the jubilee scenes were cut at the time the celebrations were respectively observed. If this question is answered in the affirmative, however, it greatly complicates the interpretation of the quarrying of the court and preparation of the portico: are we to understand that the southern wing of the portico was decorated with the portrayal of the first jubilee seven years before the northern wing was carved with scenes of the third jubilee? Why then was it left (as Wenté noted) “architecturally at a less advanced stage” than

¹³ Murnane, *Coregencies*, p. 149, with note 192, which indicates the concurrence of Charles Nims, field director of the Epigraphic Survey during the years Kheruef was being recorded; see further below.

¹⁴ Giles, *Amarna Age: Egypt*, p. 111.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

the northern wing, and its reliefs never painted? Are we then to assign the decoration of the central doorway of the portico to a time part way between years 30 and 37, or closer to the former date?

A Timeline for the Supposed Long Coregency

Let us accept for a moment the premise of a long coregency. To illustrate how the decoration of the tomb of Kheruef might be fit into the chronological limits of such a scheme, a diagram may be created with four correlative timelines that compare the reigns of the assumed coregents against the tomb of Kheruef itself (fig. 3). The uppermost line represents the recurring cycle of the civil year against which all other dates are entered, with 1 *ꜥh.t* 1 marked by a star and the seasons following in a purely schematic fashion.

The second timeline shows the reign of Amenhotep III from years 26 onward, with his three jubilees prominently noted, as well as his highest attested year date. As Charles Van Siclen III has shown, each of the three jubilees of the elder king took place over the identical range of dates, to judge from the relatively voluminous documentation from each of these celebrations: from 4 *pr.t* 26 of one regnal year to 3 *šmw* 2 in the succeeding year, or sixty-seven days for each jubilee.¹⁶ Within this span of time fell the anniversary of the king's accession, probably on 2 *šmw* 1.¹⁷ The highest attested date of Amenhotep III is a jar docket from Malkata: *ḥsb.t 38 sw.w 5 ḥry.w-rnp.t msw.t Wsir*, one of the two epagomenal days mentioned in the palace corpus, which occurred only three months into the king's 38th year.¹⁸

¹⁶ C. Van Siclen III, "The Accession Date of Amenhotep III and the Jubilee," *JNES* 32 (1973) pp. 290-300.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 294-96. Jürgen von Beckerath, *Chronologie des pharaonischen Ägypten*. MÄS 46 (Philipp von Zabern, Mainz: 1997), p. 201, chooses the option of early 3 *šmw* ("Anfang XI"), just a month later, which does not materially affect the arguments here.

¹⁸ W. Hayes, "Inscriptions from the Palace of Amenhotep III," *JNES* 10 (1951), pp. 35-40, fig. 11, no. 143. Jar label 143A, presumptively year 38 but missing its year date, mentions *msw.t Hr*. Von Beckerath, *Chronologie*, pp. 110 and 201, assigns the month 2 *pr.t* as the highest approximate date within year 38, to account for the fact that jar label 62 (Hayes, *JNES* 10, fig. 7) refers to new wine of "year 38," which must have been harvested in mid-summer.

Another vital chronological characteristic has been developed in a series of seminal articles by W. Raymond Johnson on the progression of royal art styles and the deification iconography of Amenhotep III.¹⁹ Johnson has characterized the style of the third decade of the king's reign as "mature naturalism," basing his observations on certain relief blocks extant from the king's mortuary temple at Kom el-Heitan on the west bank at Luxor—in particular the Ptah-Sokar-Osiris complex—and from the sun court at Luxor Temple.²⁰ This phase, indicated on the timeline as "naturalistic," is distinguished by a more relaxed, softer formality, of which the hallmark is light-raised and light-sunk relief, with emphasis on a more detailed rendering of the ear.

According to Johnson's studies, "mature naturalism" ends with the first jubilee, when the final, "baroque," phase asserts itself for the remainder of the reign. The new royal style is characterized by very high, rounded relief.²¹ In both three-dimensional sculpture and relief, the hallmark is "exaggerated youthfulness," with the king's face almost orb-like, the eyes overlarge, the nose made smaller and the lips enlarged. At the same time, the royal insignia are infused with solar symbolism implying the deification of Amenhotep III: the king's sporran is often adorned with multiple uraeus serpents and, on occasion, a leopard skin; the sashes of the kilt are tied with an elaborate double loop, and pendant streamers are tipped with papyrus or sedge umbels; and a *shebyu* collar

¹⁹ The initial study, which outlines three major phases, is W. R. Johnson, "Images of Amenhotep III in Thebes: Styles and Intentions," in *The Art of Amenhotep III: Art Historical Analysis*, ed. Lawrence Berman (Cleveland Museum of Art: Cleveland, 1990), pp. 26-46. An expanded scheme, with four phases that largely correspond to the each of the decades of the king's reign, is presented in idem, "The Deified Amenhotep III as the Living Re-Horakhty: Stylistic and Iconographic Considerations," in *Sesto Congresso Internazionale di Egittologia; Atti*, vol. 2, ed. Silvio Curto et al. (Società Italiana per il Gas p.A.: Turin, 1993), pp. 231-36; and idem, "Monuments and Monumental Art under Amenhotep III: Evolution and Meaning," in *Amenhotep III: Perspectives on his Reign*, eds. David O'Connor and Eric Cline (University of Michigan: Ann Arbor, 1998), pp. 80-85.

²⁰ For other relief monuments to be placed in this category, see Johnson, "Deified Amenhotep III," note 7 on pp. 233-34.

²¹ For a range of examples, see *ibid.*, note 9 on p. 234.

often adorns the royal neck. On the timeline, the “baroque” phase extends from the first jubilee until the end of Amenhotep III’s reign.²²

The major chronological points of Akhenaton’s reign are shown in the lowermost timeline. His accession fell within the very narrow range of 1 *pr.t.*, 1-8,²³ situating this event almost exactly six months distant from the accession day of his father in terms of the calendar year. In other words, the correlation of the two reigns in any proposed coregency does not offer an indefinite sliding scale of possibilities, but only one in which the accession anniversaries of Akhenaton fall halfway through the regnal years of his father; accordingly, they can only be adjusted (to the right or left) by whole-year increments. One relatively early datum is a series of graffiti in the Wadi Hammamat referring to a quarrying expedition undertaken under the auspices of the High Priest of Amun May, dated to year 4, 3 *ḥ.t* 11, implying at least an apparent tolerance of the chief god of Karnak.²⁴ The date at which the younger king changed his name to Akhenaton is of special note: the alteration took place in his 5th regnal year, between the 19th day of 3 *pr.t.*, the date of a letter in which the steward Apy addresses the king according to his birth name,²⁵ and the 13th day of 4 *pr.t.*, the

²² In a more recent commentary, Johnson (in “The Setting: History, Religion, and Art,” in *Pharaohs of the Sun: Akhenaten, Nefertiti, Tutankhamun*, edited by R. Freed, Y. Markowitz, and S. D’Auria [Bulfinch/Little, Brown and Co.: Boston, New York, and London, 1999], pp. 46-47) observes that the final decade is further distinguished by a variety of other styles as well: “the youthful ‘deification style’ of Amenhotep III’s last decade existed side by side with statuary and relief work carved in a totally different style, that of the Old Kingdom private sculpture,” noting also the influence of statuary of the late Middle Kingdom (Sesostris III and Amenemhat III) on sculpture of Amenhotep III and opining that many of the known examples originated at Amarna rather than the Theban area.

²³ W. Murnane, “On the Accession Date of Akhenaton,” in *Studies in Honor of George R. Hughes*, eds. J. H. Johnson and E. F. Wente. SAOC 39 (University of Chicago: Chicago, 1976), pp. 163-67; and W. Murnane and C. Van Siclen III, *The Boundary Stelae of Akhenaten* (Kegan Paul International: London and New York, 1993), pp. 149-55. See also von Beckerath, *Chronologie*, pp. 111, 201; and Gabolde, *D’Akhenaton à Toutânkhamon*, pp. 14-16, who asserts a preference for 1 *pr.t.* 2.

²⁴ For the two primary graffiti, see G. Goyon, *Nouvelles inscriptions rupestres du Wadi Hammamat*. Librairie d’Amérique et d’Orient Adrien-Maisonneuve: Paris, 1957, pp. 106-07, pls. 25 and 31; and W. Murnane, *Texts from the Amarna Period in Egypt*, WAW 5 (Society of Biblical Literatures, Atlanta: 1995), pp. 68 and 248.

²⁵ For the letter (pGurob 1.1 and 1.2), which also invokes the protection of Ptah on pharaoh, see *ibid.*, pp. 50-51 and 247.

date of the “earlier proclamation” on the boundary stelae at Amarna, where “Akhenaton” appears for the first time²⁶ – a span of only 24 days. The boundary stelae also furnish three other dates (in years 6 and 8), and the reception of foreign tribute, shown in the Amarna tombs of Huya and Meryra II, bears the notation “regnal year 12, 2 *pr.t* 8,” in juxtaposition with the later didactic name of the Aton.²⁷

Other events may be more loosely positioned within the early years of Amenhotep IV. One is the construction of the sandstone Ra-Horakhty structure at Karnak, where the Aton is still portrayed as a falcon-headed anthropomorphic deity and his early didactic name is written without cartouches; though not precisely dated, this shrine must have been under construction in the younger king’s first years.²⁸

The lengthy overlap between the two king’s reigns shown in fig. 3 is essentially predicated on the observations of Aldred, who suggested that the three jubilees of Amenhotep III might be closely matched with the changes in the didactic name and epithets of the Aton, resulting in a long coregency that begins in the elder king’s year 28 (year 1 of Amenhotep IV) and ends in year 39 (year 11 of Akhenaton [sic]).²⁹ Although Aldred’s theory that the Aton itself celebrated

²⁶ Murnane and Van Siclen, *Boundary Stelae*, pp. 11-68.

²⁷ For Meryra II: Norman de Garis Davies, *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna, Part II*. ASE 14 (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co.: London: 1905), pl. 38; for Huya: idem, *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna, Part III*. ASE 15 (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co.: London: 1905), pl. 13. The hieratic docket on Amarna letter EA 27 is not shown on this timeline; nonetheless, it is one of the essential chronological anchors that have been used to justify a long coregency of at least eleven years. For a recent examination of the tablet and its docket, advocating a reading of “year 2,” see W. Fritz, “Bemerkungen zur Datierungsvermerk auf der Amarnatafel Kn. 27,” *SAK* 18 (1991), pp. 207-14; for a rebuttal (unpersuasive, in the opinion of this writer) and reading of year 12, see Giles, *Amarna Age: Egypt*, pp. 30-34. The docket was added in 1 *pr.t*, but unfortunately the day is lost; it could have been written either during the very first days of regnal year [1]2 or during the very last. See also note 31, below.

²⁸ For the Ra-Horakhty temple, see J.-L. Chappaz, “Le premier édifice d’Aménophis IV à Karnak,” *BSEG* 8 (1983), pp. 13-45.

²⁹ C. Aldred, “The Beginning of the El-Amarna Period,” *JEA* 45 (1959), pp. 19-33. The numbers cited are Aldred’s; in fact, Akhenaton’s year 11 would have begun in his father’s year 38. The long coregency is often referred to as eleven or twelve years long, but there is no reason for such imprecision: one can be quite definite about the chronological options available.

three historic jubilees synchronized with those of the elder king has not been widely embraced, other grounds have been found to reinvigorate this suggested synchronism. Johnson has noted close and convincing similarities between the “mature realism” of Amenhotep III’s third decade and the restrained relief carving of the Ra-Horakhty sanctuary at Karnak.³⁰ Not only would the first appearance of the Aton (year 2 of Amenhotep IV in such a scheme) coincide nicely with the elder king’s first jubilee, but the death of Amenhotep III, probably in year 39, would correspond neatly to a restored docket of year [1]2 on Amarna letter EA 27, which (it has been claimed) contains a reference to a royal funeral.³¹ The death of Amenhotep III has also been linked to the onset of the proscription of Amun in year 12.³²

It is unlikely, however, that the earliest appearance of the Aton as a rayed solar disk can be set as early as year 2. As Jean-Luc Chappaz has shown, the Aton’s new iconic form is inextricably linked to its didactic name framed in cartouches.³³ The time span for the setting of Aton’s protocol within cartouches

³⁰ Johnson has proposed that the appearance of the Aton as a sun disk—just prior to, or exactly coincident with, the first jubilee of Amenhotep III—contains crucial theological overtones, equating the elder (and newly deified) king with the Aton itself, and that this syncretism lies at the very heart of a proper understanding of the Aton religion. For these views, see Johnson, “Images of Amenhotep III,” pp. 43-45; idem, “Monuments and Monumental Art,” p. 91-93; and idem, “The Deified Amenhotep III,” pp. 232-33.

³¹ Proponents of the long coregency uniformly support this double synchronism with the reign of Amenhotep III in years 2 and 12; see, for example, Aldred, *Akhenaten, King of Egypt*, pp. 169-82; W. R. Johnson, “Amenhotep III and Amarna: Some New Considerations,” *JEA* 82 (1996), pp. 81-82; idem, “Images of Amenhotep III,” p. 43; Giles, *Amarna Age: Egypt*, p. 136; and C. Vandersleyen, *L’Égypte et la vallée du Nil, tome 2: De la fin de l’Ancien Empire à la fin du Nouvel Empire* (Nouvelle Clio: Paris, 1988), pp. 402-07. For EA 27, see note 27, above. The internal reference in EA 27 to a “festival of mourning,” however, was already cast into doubt by Murnane, *Coregencies*, pp. 124-25; and see now W. Moran, *The Amarna Letters* (Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 1992), pp. 89-90, with n. 19, who disavows any connection of the “kimru-feast” with the funeral of Amenhotep III.

³² For this historical reconstruction, see Johnson, “Images of Amenhotep III,” pp. 45-46; idem, “Monuments and Monumental Art,” p. 93 with n. 171; and idem, “The Setting: History Religion, and Art,” pp. 47-48. For the persecution of Amun, see below.

³³ There is no example of the name of the solar disk employed without cartouches. On the other hand, Chappaz, *BSEG* 8, pp. 18, 33-34, cites five

seems to be provided by two pieces of linen that were entwined around divine statues found in the tomb of Tutankhamun. One linen wrapping displays the didactic name without cartouches in conjunction with the notation “year 3,” and the second shows the name inside cartouches along with the date “year 4, 2 šmw.”³⁴ In order for the first appearance of the rayed disk to correlate with the first jubilee of Amenhotep III, the junior king would have had to ascend the throne no later than the middle of his father’s 27th regnal year, as shown in the present timeline, not his 28th.³⁵

Placed between these concurrent reigns, the decoration of Kheruef’s tomb occupies two restricted spans of time, as Murnane pointed out. The lintel of the entrance doorway to the tomb bears the figure of Amenhotep IV accompanied by his mother, Tiye, in paired offering scenes in which the king offers wine to Ra-Horakhty and Maat, “daughter of Ra,” on the left side, and incense to Atum and the “chieftainess of Thebes” on the right (fig. 4). The passage just within the doorway bears the well known scenes of Amenhotep IV offering a libation to his parents (fig. 2) and reciting an acrostic hymn addressed to Ra-Horakhty and Amun. The iconography evident on the figure of Amenhotep III—who wears a leopard skin and broad streamers on his sporran, and is referred to only by his prenomen, Nebmaatre—is typical of the solar insignia added to his costume only after his deification during the first jubilee. The entrance doorway and passage,

examples in the Ra-Horakhty temple at Karnak in which the cartouches of the anthropomorphic god were added later; in these cases, the (original) raised relief was shaved down and the didactic name merely incised, this time within cartouches. Gabolde, *D’Akhenaton à Toutânkhamon*, n. 202 on p. 26, also notes, “l’apparition des cartouches autour du protocole d’Aton a, en fait, précédé de très peu la nouvelle iconographie du dieu d’Amenhotep IV,” and cites two other monuments on which the hieracocephalic Ra-Horakhty displays his didactic name inside cartouches.

³⁴ These pieces of linen (JE 62705 and JE 62703, respectively) were first noted by D. Redford (“The Sun-Disc in Akhenaten’s Program: Its Worship and Antecedents, I,” *JARCE* 13 [1976], p. 55) as pertinent to this question. See now Gabolde, *D’Akhenaton à Toutânkhamon*, p. 27 with note 211, citing H. Beinlich and M. Saleh, *Corpus der hieroglyphischen Inschriften aus dem Grab des Tutanchamun*. Griffith Institute: Oxford, 1989), pp. 131 (Carter 281a) and 133 (Carter 291a).

³⁵ The difference of a year does not greatly affect the arguments offered here in regard to TT 192. If the beginning of the coregency is correlated to Amenhotep IV’s year 2 rather than year 3, each construction phase of the tomb would be expanded by a year, and the hiatus between them lessened by a year.

therefore, must have been carved at some point after the first jubilee but before Amenhotep IV changed his name: at most a period of less than two years.

With the completion of these elements of the entrance, work on the decoration of Kheruef's tomb must have been brought to a halt for over six years. Those advocating a long coregency would hold that the great courtyard was in the process of excavation during this period, as well as the rooms beyond; the construction of the tomb is further addressed below.

The second phase of decoration in Kheruef's tomb would have been initiated after the third jubilee of Amenhotep III (and in the 11th year of his son), according to the long coregency scheme, and it is of uncertain duration. The carving of the scenes could scarcely have begun prior to the completion of the third jubilee (unless the reliefs are to be considered anticipatory). Realistically, the creation of the third jubilee reliefs can scarcely be made to fit into the reign of Amenhotep III at all. Since his highest known day date falls barely three months after the completion of the third jubilee, it is entirely possible that these reliefs were carved only following the king's death.

Work on the tomb was apparently terminated after a catastrophic collapse that forestalled further carving or repair, at least in the innermost rooms.³⁶ Two of the pillars in the columned hall closest to the central door, however, received their dedication texts before the roof fell in, and a fragment from the top of one of the pillars still contains the intact name of Amun, here actually compounded with the name of Ra-Horakhty.³⁷ As it was not defaced during the Atonist proscription, the name provides a clue that, even in the scheme of the long coregency, the collapse of the columned hall must have preceded the desecration of the figure and name of Amun by Akhenaton. On our theoretical time line, the persecution of Amun is generously indicated at year 13, allowing for approximately two years for the decoration of the western portico and its adjacent spaces.³⁸

³⁶ Nims, in *Kheruef*, p. 15.

³⁷ *Kheruef*, pl. 80F. Numerous mentions of Kheruef's title as *imy-r pr m pr-imn*, with "Amun" left intact, occur on the column fragments as well.

³⁸ It seems clear that the name and figure of Kheruef were attacked sometime during the reign of Akhenaton, but only after the accumulation of debris that helped to preserve at least one of his depictions in the lowermost register of the

Iconographic and Chronological Conundra

Given the severe constraints of the long coregency scheme, the entrance area of Kheruef's tomb offers a proliferation of discordant data, foremost of which is the presence or absence of certain royal figures. Amenhotep III, newly deified in his first jubilee, a ceremony in which Kheruef himself participated, seems to have been banished from the entrance lintel in favor of his son and the queen mother.³⁹ The primary female presence throughout is Queen Tiye, whom Kheruef served as steward; and while Nefertiti was already deemed of sufficient importance to be the sole officiant in her own *Hw.t-bnbn* across the river at Karnak,⁴⁰ she appears nowhere in the tomb of Kheruef, either in name or in figure.

Religious anachronisms abound. At a time when Amenhotep IV was building temples to his new deity at Karnak, replete with its fully developed representation of the Aton as a disk with animate rays, the king apparently had himself depicted on Kheruef's tomb entrance in front of an anthropomorphic Ra-Horakhty and Atum (see fig. 4). In the case of the former deity, Ra-Horakhty is provided with the epithet *ntr 3 nb p.t*, a protocol abandoned by Amenhotep IV in his own third year or earlier, by which time the didactic name of the Aton was already fully elaborated.⁴¹ In the offering text to Ra-Horakhty on the door jamb of the entrance (who is not provided with any epithet in this instance), it seems clear that the deity is viewed as an entity quite separate from the Aton: Ra-Horakhty is invoked in order "that he (the god) may grant observation of the

portico; see Nims in *Kheruef*, pp. 14-15. The fall of the portico roof may not have occurred simultaneously with the collapse of the columned hall.

³⁹ The reason for this absence given by Aldred in *Akhenaten, Pharaoh of Egypt*, pp. 108-09, is hardly compelling: that Amenhotep III donated the tomb to Kheruef about the time of his first jubilee, but that Kheruef simply "associated the son of his patroness with her husband, particularly as he had recently been made co-regent."

⁴⁰ See D. Redford in R. Smith and D. Redford, *The Akhenaten Temple Project, Vol. 1: Initial Discoveries* (Aris and Phillips: Warminster, 1976), pp 79-82, pls. 20-23.

⁴¹ See note 34, above; and I. Munro, "Zusammenstellung von Datierungskriterien für Inschriften der Amarna-Zeit nach J.J. Perepelkin 'Die Revolution Amenophis' IV.'", Teil 1 (russ.), 1967," *GM* 94 (1986), pp. 81-82; and Gabolde, *D'Akhenaton à Toutânkhamon*, pp. 24-25, with references.

solar disk (*itn*). . . (to Kheruef)."⁴² Such references cannot be easily reconciled with purportedly contemporary icons at Karnak that depict Ra-Horakhty-Aton *as* the physical disk of the sun. The plethora of other deities invoked in such proximity to Amenhotep IV is also problematic for the coregency scheme, to wit, Osiris, Isis, Thoth, and Anubis, to say nothing of Amun *p3wty t3.wy* and Amen-Ra *nb nsw.t t3.wy*.⁴³ Moreover, the prominent occurrence of the name of Amun in the acrostic hymn of the passageway, adjacent to Amenhotep III's portrayal in jubilee garb, ensures that this area must have been decorated together with the lintel and jambs of the entrance.⁴⁴ The resultant contradictions within the long coregency diagram are irreconcilable.⁴⁵

The long coregency poses two more puzzles on the lintel of the second doorway, which leads into the unfinished columned hall (fig. 5). The lintel is laid out in a manner identical to that of the entrance doorway, but the damage is such that only the lower portions of the scenes remain, so that the identity of the royal and divine figures cannot be determined. The door jambs contain ten vertical offering texts, rather than eight, invoking the following gods: Amun, Ra-Horakhty,⁴⁶ Khepri, Atum, Osiris Ptah, Anubis, Wepwawet, Min, Djehuty, and Hathor. By analogy with the entrance, the damaged lintel—presumably carved

⁴² Following the translation of E. Wente, in *Kheruef*, p. 33.

⁴³ Gabolde, *D'Akhenaton à Toutânkhamon*, pp. 25-26, assigns Amenhotep IV's prohibition against using the name of Amun—rather than active persecution itself—to a time prior to the enclosure of the Aton's name in cartouches, that is, by year 3, even before the time at which work on Kheruef's entrance could have commenced: "Le dieu de Thèbes n'est pas encore proscrit, mais il (Amenhotep IV) n'est plus fait allusion à lui que très discrètement dans les inscriptions officielles, notamment dans le nom du roi."

⁴⁴ E. Wente, in *Kheruef*, pp. 35-37, with pls. 14-15.

⁴⁵ A number of the discrepancies thus far noted could be resolved by assigning the inception of the coregency to the middle of regnal year 29 of Amenhotep III. This rearrangement would break the neat synchronicity between the first jubilee of the elder king and the first appearance of the Aton (delaying the latter by two years), and the year 12 of Akhenaton would then start midway into the 40th year of his father; but see further below.

⁴⁶ The god is again mentioned here without the didactic protocol that, by year 11 of Akhenaton, had become numbingly *de rigueur* for the Aton at Amarna; nor is the accompanying text compatible with Atonist theology: "that he (Ra-Horakhty) may grant entry into his mountain of the righteous and voyaging in front of the stars that are wont to go up to the sky," after Wente, in *Kheruef*, p. 68.

along with the adjacent jubilee reliefs of year 37⁴⁷ and thus concurrent with the junior coregent's year 11—should contain figures of Akhenaton and Tiye, offering to seated male deities with goddesses standing behind their thrones.⁴⁸ The reverent mention of a multitude of such deities, four represented in human form, in juxtaposition with Akhenaton in his 11th or 12th regnal year, as the long coregency requires, is simply nonsense.⁴⁹ Perhaps, then, it was Amenhotep III who was portrayed on the lintel with Tiye, and whose sensibilities required the inclusion of traditional gods that were, by that time, anathema to his son? But this again raises the question: why should the elder coregent have been portrayed on the lintel of the second doorway with his wife, while the son was depicted on the tomb entrance with the queen mother? Even the supposition that Amenhotep III is indeed the king portrayed on the lintel of the second doorway begs the question of what was *not* happening at the entrance of the tomb: in a monument still being actively decorated in the younger king's 11th and 12th year, why was no attempt made—at the very least—to alter the nomen

⁴⁷ For the suggestion—and rejection—that the dates referring to regnal year 37 in the Kheruef reliefs were later additions, see Betsy Bryan, in *Egypt's Dazzling Sun: Amenhotep III and His World*, edited by A. Kozloff and B. Bryan (Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, 1992), note 6 on pp. 205-06; and Gabolde, *D'Akhenaton à Toutânkhamon*, p. 69.

⁴⁸ It is generally agreed that Akhenaton was probably the king portrayed on the lintel of the second doorway; see Aldred, *Akhenaten, King of Egypt*, p. 92; Nims, in *Kheruef*, p. 13; and A. Radwan, *Die Darstellungen des regierenden Königs und seiner Familienangehörigen in den Privatgräbern des 18. Dynastie*. MÄS 21 (Bruno Hessling: Berlin, 1969), p. 94.

⁴⁹ Again, Amun and Ra-Horakhty are especially problematic. Gabolde, *D'Akhenaton à Toutânkhamon*, p. 25 with n. 200, asserts that, on the basis of monuments dated to the early years of Amenhotep IV, Amun (though not yet actively persecuted) was no longer mentioned in royal texts of that king from his regnal year 4 onward. To be sure, even after the first several years of Akhenaton's reign, a number of deities other than the Aton were tolerated and even honored, at least in specific contexts; see S. Bickel, *Untersuchungen im Totentempel des Merneptah in Theben III: Tore und andere wiederverwendete Bauteile Amenophis' III*. BÄBA 16 (Franz Steiner: Stuttgart, 1997), pp. 92-94. Gabolde, *D'Akhenaton à Toutânkhamon*, pp 32-34, delineates the extent of the sporadic and inconsistent attacks against Amun and other deities outside of the Theban area.

of Amenhotep IV to “Akhenaton,” as had been done consistently at Karnak and elsewhere?⁵⁰

Second, there is the artistic convention of the “near foot,” a criterion that can be applied to the one of the few pertinent iconographic elements preserved on the lintel in question. Edna Russmann has demonstrated that the representation of the near foot in Egyptian art, with all of its five toes indicated, originated in painted form in certain Theban tombs of pre-Amarna date, but during the reign of Akhenaton became virtually a “royal prerogative” extended to the king and immediate members of the family.⁵¹ It is noteworthy, then, that the convention of the near foot, a motif that Akhenaton deliberately adopted as a feature of his personal royal presentation and extended to immediate family members,⁵² is avoided everywhere in TT 192, although it was otherwise consistently applied on private and royal monuments of the younger king for much of his reign.

Textual and iconographic anomalies such as these can only be explained, in the context of a long coregency, by the cumbersome presumption of conflicting but separate artistic and religious sensibilities, practiced according to geographic location or at the whimsical discretion of the coregents while Amenhotep III was still alive.⁵³ Such a presumption would, a priori, vitiate any attempt to trace in reasonable fashion the consistent development of artistic and religious trends during the presumed coregency period, or to formulate a viable chronological framework on the basis of them.

Finally, the erasure of the name of Amun throughout the tomb is only possible, in the coregency scenario outlined here, if its inception is dated roughly

⁵⁰ For the Aton temples, see D. Redford in Smith and Redford, *Akhenaten Temple Project, Vol. 1*, p. 76; for the Ra-Horakhty shrine, see Chappaz, *BSEG* 8, p. 33, who notes eleven examples, all executed in incised carving.

⁵¹ E. Russmann, “The Anatomy of an Artistic Convention: Representation of the Near Foot in Two Dimensions Through the New Kingdom,” *BES* 2 (1980), pp. 57-81.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 70-71.

⁵³ The suggestion that Akhenaton was motivated, in the decoration of the second doorway, to embrace traditional religious and artistic conventions out of consideration for his father is *a priori* unsatisfactory. In any case, it has already been pointed out that dated records suggest that Amenhotep III was, in all likelihood, deceased at the time this part of Kheruef’s tomb was decorated.

no earlier than Akhenaton's year 13, after the decoration of the several offering texts in Kheruef's columned hall. Susanne Bickel's study of the northern monumental gateway of Amenhotep III's mortuary complex, however, raises certain arguments for assigning the beginning of the persecution of Amun to the period directly following Akhenaton's own name change and his removal to Amarna: year 5 or shortly thereafter.⁵⁴ Bickel has noted that Amun was not merely eradicated from the scenes of the gateway, but shortly thereafter his figure was recarved as a deified form of Nebmaatre, probably as part of a prearranged process of cultic transformation.⁵⁵ The figures of the deified Nebmaatre are provided with various epithets, one of which (*ntr nfr*) seems only to be employed by Akhenaton in the years preceding the change in the didactic name of the Aton, after which it is replaced by *hqꜣ nfr*.⁵⁶ The alterations of the monumental gateway must therefore be assigned to a time preceding the revision of the Aton's cartouches.⁵⁷ Bickel observes that scholarly consensus assigns the final manifestation of the Aton's didactic protocol to years 8 or 9, providing a fairly narrow range (between years 5 and 9) for the alterations to have been effected at the mortuary temple gateway.⁵⁸ Such a dating would also

⁵⁴ Bickel, *Untersuchungen*, pp. 91-94. If these changes were indeed effected in year 5 or 6, the portrayal of Nebmaatra in the entrance passage of Kheruef's tomb preceded them by just one or two years. Her position on the early persecution of Amun is supported by Gabolde, *D'Akhenaton à Toutânkhamon*, pp. 29-30, who also examines, and dismisses, the arguments that Aldred has proposed for assigning a later date of year 12 to the proscription. That Amun was still tolerated in year 4 of Amenhotep IV is indicated by the series of graffiti in the Wadi Hammamat that refer to an expedition sent there on 3 *ꜣh.t* 11, a date that falls toward the end of the king's fourth regnal year (see fig. 3); see *ibid.*, p. 26.

⁵⁵ Not to be confused with Nebmaatra lord of Nubia, or the deified Amenhotep III in Luxor Temple; see Bickel, *Untersuchungen*, pp. 89-90. Bickel (p. 89) is further of the opinion that the recut figures of Nebmaatra on the gateway cannot be concurrent with the last decade of Amenhotep III, as they are inconsistent with the proportional canon of that period and lack the expected solar iconography associated with Amenhotep III in his final years.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 93, citing Munro, *GM* 94 (1985), p. 85.

⁵⁷ That is, the final manifestation of the Aton's protocol, which was subject to numerous minor alterations, for which see Gabolde, *D'Akhenaton à Toutânkhamon*, pp. 105-06.

⁵⁸ Bickel, *Untersuchungen*, pp. 92-93. The year 8 or 9 datum derives largely from the early study of B. Gunn, "Notes on the Aten and His Names, *JEA* 9 (1929), pp. 168-76.

make it impossible for the name of Amun to be used in the tomb of Kheruef in year 11 or later: it could hardly have been employed in the innermost reaches of the tomb while it was being excised at the entrance.⁵⁹ In addition, on the occasion of the presentation of foreign tribute, shown in the tombs of Huyra and Meryra II at Amarna and bearing the date of year 12, 2 *pr.t* 8, the royal couple are enthroned beneath the later didactic name of the Aton, seemingly confirming these rough parameters.⁶⁰

The Quarrying and Decoration of the Tomb of Kheruef

The presumption that Kheruef's tomb was excavated and decorated in the usual Theban manner, proceeding from east to west, not only offers firm support for a long coregency, but is essential to it, demonstrating the rise of Amenhotep IV to the throne before the death of his father. In fact, far from representing a typical example of the Theban tomb genre, TT 192 is an innovation in private mortuary architecture, notably by reason of its large open court, sunk into the floor of the Asasif valley. Moreover, the condition of its walls at the time of its abandonment directly contradicts the assertion that work began at its entrance and proceeded inexorably toward its innermost rooms (see fig. 1). The main descending ramp was completed and its walls smoothed, and of course the doorway and entrance leading into the court were carved with their reliefs and even partially painted. In the next area directly adjacent to the entrance, within

⁵⁹ Gabolde, *D'Akhenaton à Toutânkhamon*, p. 29, also views the persecution of Amun to have begun more or less concurrently with Akhenaton's name change in year 5: "C'est vraisemblablement de cette époque que date le début des remplacements du *nomen* «Amenhotep» par le *praenomen* «Nebmaâtre» dans les cartouches d'Amenhotep III et les martelages du nom d'Amon sur les parois des temples thébains: il serait paradoxal que le roi censurât les références à Amon jusque dans son propre nom de naissance si c'était pour laisser intacts partout ailleurs."

⁶⁰ Gabolde, *D'Akhenaton à Toutânkhamon*, pp. 110-18, has recently urged a reconsideration of the first appearance of the later didactic name to year 14. His conclusions rest on a statistical parsing of the variants of the Aton's names at Amarna; on the differing number of princesses in the two scenes of foreign tribute; and on the caution that the carving of the tribute scenes may *both* be retrospective by a year or two. Nonetheless, it is not the appearance of the Aton's later didactic name that is of concern here: it is the date of the active proscription of Amun; these phenomena are not necessarily linked.

the court itself, the columns of the eastern portico had only reached the stage of roughing out; two sections of the wall behind the columns had been smoothed, but this work had not progressed far. As for the courtyard, the northern and southern porticos were largely unquarried; only two columns in the northwestern corner were in the process of being roughed out. The western portico, by contrast, is in a state of advanced completion. It had received its jubilee scenes (the third jubilee had been partially painted as well), with the pillars of the northern wing fully carved, while the pillars of the southern wing had been left only in rough condition. The walls of the large columned hall, yet farther in, had been completely smoothed, with its pillars architecturally finished, but just a few of the texts on the columns had been drafted and carved. The final rectangular chamber, with its double row of columns, had been roughed out, but only the eastern half of the walls of the room had been smoothed. There is no demonstrable east-to-west progression here, but rather a more complicated distribution of labor.

Nor does it make practical sense to claim that TT 192 was quarried from its entrance doorway alone, with draftsmen and painters following on the heels of the stonemasons. The proposition that this vast tomb was excavated from its entrance alone would imply that the open court, carved into the bedrock of the Asasif, was created essentially by tunneling from below, a procedure that is simply not credible from a logistical point of view. Such a scenario mandates laborers engaged in removing over 5000 cubic meters of quarried chip, taken from all parts of the subterranean tomb, solely through an entrance doorway measuring 1.4m wide. For a time the doorway would have been inaccessible due to sculptors engaged in carving the delicate reliefs of Amenhotep IV performing a libation to his parents, and for years thereafter these scenes would have been exposed to gangs of men hauling debris.

The Epigraphic Survey realized the essential problem and came to different conclusions, based on the fact that the open court itself contains so many unfinished features, including porticos whose columns had never been fully cut:

With quarrying going on simultaneously in the front of the tomb and more than thirty meters away in the rear, the disposal of the debris from the rear without interference with the work in the front makes probable the use of a ramp or ramps in the area of the court, which would have delayed the quarrying there.⁶¹

The problem of access and movement in the unfinished tomb led to an obvious deduction:

Indeed, it may be that more than one ramp was used so that quarrying could be done more rapidly. Besides the present ramp at the entrance, one or more could have been started in the area where the court eventually was quarried. A possible point for the start of another ramp is a depression that ran north and south through the area of the court, evidences of which are shown on plates 3A and 6A.⁶²

The most likely scenario, then, is that the cutting of TT 192 was initiated in the area of the open court by means of at least two construction ramps (one of which was the entranceway itself) leading from ground level into the ever-deepening court, with the access ramps left in place until the court had been fully roughed out to its present dimensions. Such organization would enable work to proceed on a much broader and faster scale, and without damage to the completed decoration.

The quarrying of Kheruef's tomb using the open court as the starting point vitiates the need to view the excavation (and thus decoration) of its various parts in the usual east-to-west sequence. However, the tomb does otherwise conform to the usual exigencies of mortuary construction, in that decoration was begun on wall surfaces as soon as they could be made available to the draftsmen. Presumably, once the entranceway, court, and the two inner halls were roughed out in their basic dimensions (aside from the columns of the northern and southern portico), draftsmen were set to work at the front of the tomb (the

⁶¹ Nims, in *Kheruef*, p. 6.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

entrance doorway) and the western portico simultaneously, and both teams began working from the east gradually westward. Such a presumption accords with the sequence of finished areas of the tomb itself, and there is therefore no need, on architectural grounds at least, to postulate a chronological gap between the entrance and western portico of the tomb.⁶³

Moreover, it is remarkable how similar in style and technique the carved decoration of the western portico is to that of the entrance of the tomb. By itself, the passage of five or six years would hardly make a great difference in terms of a promulgated and monolithic royal style, but the years in question are those that span the full flowering of Amenhotep III's deification iconography, the founding of Akhetaton, and probably also the moderation of the earliest and most extreme stylistic experiments of the Amarna period. Aside from the outward trappings of Amenhotep III's solar insignia (such as the leopard-skin sporran and *shebyu* collar) the tomb of Kheruef seems to have been utterly untouched by any of the rampant artistic innovations or revisions promulgated, in very different ways, by Akhenaton and by his father: its decoration is surprisingly immune to the turbulent and fecund artistic milieu of a long coregency.⁶⁴ As Murnane observed, advocates of a long coregency must embrace a gap in the decoration of Kheruef's tomb, though his estimate of ten years should be shortened to six.⁶⁵ If the architecture of the tomb fails to support such an interpretation, other features of the tomb decoration similarly fail to demonstrate a total suspension and subsequent resumption of work.

In its documentation of Kheruef's tomb, the Epigraphic Survey was keenly aware of the importance of the reliefs in illuminating aspects of the coregency

⁶³ Very few of these observations are new. The reader will note what a large debt is owed to Redford's early chapter on the coregency (*History and Chronology*, pp. 113-17), where his percipient observations, recorded years before many of the details were confirmed in the publication of *Kheruef*, have stood the test of time.

⁶⁴ Compare, for example, the tombs of Ramose (N. de Garis Davies, *The Tomb of the Vizier Ramose*. Mond Excavations at Thebes Vol. 1 [Egypt Exploration Society: London, 1941], pls. 32-38) and Parennefer (idem, "Akhenaten at Thebes," *JEA* 9 [1923], pls. 24,1 and 25), in which the innovations wrought by the Atonist revolution were freely employed; an argument may be made that both traditional and new styles were used simultaneously, at least in private tombs. See also Gabolde, *D'Akhenaton à Toutânkhamon*, p. 13, note 75, and pp. 70-73.

⁶⁵ Murnane, *Coregencies*, p. 149.

question, and its epigraphers closely examined the style of carving at different points in the tomb. Regarding the entrance doorway, the inner door to the first columned court, and the passages attached to those doors, Nims states that

the work in these areas seems to have been carried out concurrently; a study of the style of the reliefs shows similarities and, in some cases, identity in treatment. A striking example of the latter is the consistency in the details of the hieroglyph of the owl . . . Note the design on the upper wing coverts; the crosslines on the primary and secondary feathers of the wing; the chevron pattern of the feathers of the breast, abdomen, legs, and undertail; and the lines on the rectrices. . . . The consistency of treatment of the details in the reliefs suggests that those reliefs were carved by the same sculptor or by sculptors of the same school at approximately the same time.⁶⁶

Simultaneous work on the tomb decoration is reflected also by the evidence of its abandonment, in every area of the tomb, prior to its completion. Although the tomb entrance has often been characterized as finished, a smoothed area to the south of the entry jambs was left only with a painted red grid, as if in expectation of some scene to balance the existing relief on the north, but it was left without a draft cartoon.⁶⁷ The north wing of the western portico (third jubilee) was fully carved as far as it had been drafted, but a smoothed area at the northernmost extremity of the wall had been left blank. The upper registers had been painted, while the lower register had not, perhaps because it had been carved later; the ceiling inscriptions had never been completed.⁶⁸ The reliefs of the south wing (first jubilee) had been largely carved, except for the southernmost extremity of the drafted scenes, where the stern of the bark and the steersman are incomplete. There remains sufficient stone to have added a lower register to match that of the north wing, but further work was not undertaken;

⁶⁶ Nims, in *Kheruef*, pp. 5-6.

⁶⁷ Pointed out initially by Redford, *History and Chronology*, p. 117; confirmed by Nims, in *Kheruef*, p. 11.

⁶⁸ Nims, *ibid.*, p. 10, observes that no paint drips are evident on the bare stone of the lower register.

no pigment was added here, but a portion of the wall was whitewashed as if in anticipation of the event.⁶⁹

Conclusions

The architecture of the tomb of Kheruef argues for an atypical progression of work by stonecutters and draftsmen, and various epigraphic and stylistic criteria also point toward the simultaneous decoration of the reliefs of the entrance and those of the western porticos. If we take these indicators at face value and suspend the dogmatic insistence on an east-to-west sequence of labor in TT 192, the decorated surfaces of Kheruef's tomb must be seen as having been completed at roughly the same time. If this conclusion is correct, none of the carved reliefs can significantly predate the latest chronological indicator contained within them, namely regnal year 37 of Amenhotep III. The argument for a long coregency is therefore impossible to sustain.

Moreover, the iconographic and textual contradictions noted in the paragraphs above can only be resolved by the conclusion that Amenhotep IV succeeded Amenhotep III on the throne following his death, probably in his 38th regnal year, with little or no overlapping coregency period. The relief decoration in Kheruef's tomb, the excavation of which may have begun in the last years of Amenhotep III, belongs to the very early period of Amenhotep IV, doubtless to his first two years, before Ra-Horakhty became associated with the protocol that was to develop into the Aton's early didactic name,⁷⁰ and thus while Nefertiti's rise to unusual ritual stature had not yet taken place (nor, perhaps, had the union of the royal couple). Thus it is Amenhotep IV, the new sole reigning king, who was commemorated on both of the doorways of the tomb along with the queen mother, whose steward Kheruef was. On the other hand, the elder king was celebrated as a deceased ancestor (Nebmaatre) in the entrance passageway, as

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Perepelkin's observation regarding Amenhotep IV's titulary—summarized by Munro, *GM* 94 (1985), p. 84—that the king's epithet *ʿ3-m-ḥʿ=f* is included within cartouche only from last third of regnal year 3 is apparently incorrect. On the lintel of Kheruef's entrance, the king's nomen reads *imn-ḥtp ntr ḥq3 W3s.t ʿ3-m-ḥʿ=f*, and yet Ra-Horakhty is not referred to by his early didactic name, which was already in use in year 3, as the linen from the tomb of Tutankhamun attests.

well as in the retrospective wall reliefs of the western portico, where his jubilees are commemorated. Unlike the former commemorative scene, the latter were historical ceremonies, in which Amenhotep III is appropriately referred to by both his nomen and prenomen and in which Kheruef figured prominently and arranged to have recorded on the walls of his tomb. The plethora of standard deities that appears on the jambs of the two doorways of the tomb was still palatable to the new king in the first year of his reign, while the adoption of the “near foot” as a distinctive iconographic feature for the royal family, along with many other Amarna innovations, still lay in the future. The unaltered state of Amenhotep IV’s nomen in the entrance of tomb is understandable if the tomb was abandoned as unusable well before the adoption of his later name.⁷¹

In the damaged entrance passageway, the space in front of the elder king’s figure is sufficient to accommodate only his prenomen, written in a single column of text (just below the name and epithet of Wadjet), which the Epigraphic Survey was at a loss to reconstruct (fig. 2).⁷² The text is probably to be understood as *[ntr nfr] Nb-mꜣ.t[-Rꜥ]*, an abbreviated protocol that appears frequently at Soleb in connection with representations of Amenhotep III garbed in the *sed*-festival robe, and with the deified Nebmaatre of the northern gateway of the king’s mortuary complex. In the tomb of Kheruef, this titular formation may adumbrate the changes Akhenaton effected at that latter monument in conjunction with the effacement of the god Amun.⁷³

The monument may have been abandoned when the roof of the columned hall collapsed around year 2 and, doubtless because of its ruined condition, no effort was made to alter the cartouches of Amenhotep IV when the king changed his name to Akhenaton.⁷⁴ This did not save the tomb from the later attentions of

⁷¹ This reconstruction of events is largely consistent with Gabolde’s view, in *D’Akhenaton à Toutânkhamon*, pp. 12-13, 70.

⁷² *Kheruef*, p. 35, with pl. 13.

⁷³ See Bickel, *Untersuchungen*, pp. 86-90, in particular the textual variants given on p. 86. One difference in the tomb of Kheruef is that Nebmaatra is adorned with the trappings of solar symbolism accorded the king during his jubilees, while the deified Amenhotep III in the mortuary temple is not portrayed in such a manner.

⁷⁴ Nor was any effort made to alter the nomen of Amenhotep III, which during the reign of Akhenaton was frequently recut as a paired “Nebmaatra” to the

the Atonists, who attacked the name of Amun wherever they could find it, nor from the persecutions aimed against Akhenaton (inconsistently achieved) and Kheruef himself.

Admittedly, the architectural and decorative features of Kheruef's tomb are but one part of the complicated coregency debate, but it is not within the scope of this paper to pursue other points of the controversy. The debate over the existence of a long coregency is, in the opinion of this writer, one that is of markedly diminished scholarly value, and one that can be answered in the negative.⁷⁵ But having argued here for the accession of Amenhotep IV only following the death of his father, the present writer might note that other interesting avenues offer themselves for exploration. Not the least of these stems from Johnson's keen observations regarding the stylistic conventions adopted by Amenhotep IV at the inception of his reign, which are clearly not a continuation of the final phase of Amenhotep III's reign, but can be viewed as a deliberate reversion to the "naturalism" of that king's third decade. That is, in the opening year or two of his reign Amenhotep IV chose to spurn the "baroque" characteristics of his father's deification phase—developed for idiosyncratic reasons by Amenhotep III—and embraced instead an older idiom associated with the deceased king that may have been regarded by him and his contemporaries as "pre-jubilee," and which provided the baseline for subsequent experimentation in royal and divine iconography by his son and heir along very different lines.

prenomen, or erased with care and simply left blank; for the latter phenomenon, see *ibid.*, p. 83.

⁷⁵ Within the context of the tomb of Kheruef, at any rate, an argument might be made for a short coregency, if there be any who perceive a necessity for it.

ADDENDUM

The preceding article has conscientiously focused solely on the monument of Kheruef to reconstruct a time line that illustrates the unlikely possibility of a long coregency. With the appearance of all three volumes on the architecture and decoration of the temple of Soleb,⁷⁶ authored by Michela Schiff Giorgini and edited by Natalie Beaux, an irresistible opportunity arises, however, to make one further observation on the essential utility of the timeline in Figure 3 in establishing firm chronological parameters to the coregency debate.

The magnificently detailed publication of Soleb Temple outlines the gradual construction of the temple complex, beginning with the very earliest structures: a large open enclosure with sixteen gates (actually, nonfunctioning doorways, or “portes-chapelles”) and an early peripteros shrine. The enclosure was later razed and the peripteros served as the core for a double sanctuary dedicated to Amun and a new local god, the deified Nebmaatra of Nubia, to which was then added a hypostyle hall, two courts built sequentially, an outer pylon, and finally an entry porch. The excavators were able to follow these multiple stages of construction by means of distinct strata of beaten earth painted with whitewash, clearly associated with each of the phases of temple development.⁷⁷ These sequential layers, of which thirty-two were ultimately identified, are referred to in the publication as “sols blanchis” and provide a sound basis for relative site chronology.⁷⁸ The temple publication assumes that each “sol blanchi” represents a new sedimentary deposit of a Nile inundation, so that the temple must have been built over the course of thirty-two years. Since the excavators associated the twenty-eighth “sol” with the arrangements for the

⁷⁶ Michela Schiff Giorgini, in collaboration with Clément Robichon and Jean Leclant, prepared and edited by Nathalie Beaux, *Soleb III: Le temple: description*, (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1998); idem, *Soleb IV: Le temple: plans et photographies*. (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 2003); idem, *Soleb V: Le temple: bas-reliefs et inscriptions* (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 2002).

⁷⁷ *Soleb III*, pp. 24-29; *Soleb IV*, figs. 8-20.

⁷⁸ *Soleb III*, pp. 31-33.

first jubilee of year 30,⁷⁹ they therefore concluded that Soleb Temple must have been founded in the kings' third regnal year.⁸⁰

Problems abound with this reconstruction of events. To mention just one difficulty: among the reliefs of the first jubilee, carved in the first court at Soleb, one large panel depicts Amenhotep III and his officials making the rounds of the great sixteen-gated precinct, performing rituals of "striking" each doorway as part of the jubilee festivities.⁸¹ Yet the enclosure itself is associated archaeologically only with "sols" 1 through 16, ostensibly years 3 through 18, after which it was demolished. The excavators' interpretation of the stratigraphy implies that the "striking" ceremonies had to have been conducted eleven years before the first jubilee was actually observed, surely a dubious interpretation of the evidence.⁸²

More importantly, several decorated blocks from the earliest peripteros shrine of Soleb temple, which were recovered in the course of excavation, belong to the final, or "baroque," phase of Amenhotep III's reign, as outlined by W. Raymond Johnson:⁸³ the scenes are rendered overall in markedly high relief, and king is depicted with a rounded, youthful-seeming face, with a large eye set at a noticeable angle in his face. Hence, art-stylistic analysis also supports a much later date for the founding of the temple than that suggested by the excavators of Soleb, a date probably tied to the creation of the cult of the deified king in conjunction with the first jubilee. The "striking" rites shown taking place within the sixteen-gated enclosure may be assumed to have transpired when that monument was still standing and were commemorated, after the enclosure was dismantled, in the scenes adorning the first court of the temple. The temple was doubtless planned and erected during the last eight or ten years of Amenhotep III's reign.

⁷⁹ The date is given in a text from the first court, showing the king carried on a palanquin as the jubilee ceremonies unfold; *Soleb IV*, pl. 97.

⁸⁰ *Soleb III*, pp. 29-30.

⁸¹ *Soleb IV*, pls. 34-60.

⁸² Clearly, the assumption that each "sol blanchi" can be equated with a separate Nile inundation must be rethought: doubtless these levels were laid down in much more frequent sequence.

⁸³ See note 19.

Implications for the postulated long coregency are to be found in the entry porch attached to the first pylon, where several scenes originally ascribed to Amenhotep III have been usurped for Amenhotep IV, a change that occurred prior to his adoption of the name “Akhenaton.” If one were to plot these salient chronological indicators on the double time line in Figure 3, the temple of Soleb would have been founded around years 28-29 of Amenhotep III (corresponding to the first years of the purported long coregency) in preparation for the first jubilee; the sixteen-gated enclosure would have been utilized for those rites in year 30 (the middle of Amenhotep IV’s regnal year 3); and the usurpation of the entry porch must have been accomplished before the change in Amenhotep IV’s name, at the beginning of his own regnal year 5 (his father’s year 31). Most of the work on Soleb Temple, then—the demolition of the great jubilee enclosure and the building of the double sanctuary, the hypostyle hall, the second court, the first court and the entry porch, in addition to all the decoration—would have to be telescoped into less than two years, hardly a feasible task, no matter how large and talented the work force.

Even more to the point, the archaeological and architectural evidence from Soleb, compressed thus onto the coregency timeline, requires Amenhotep IV to be actively engaged in usurping his own father’s reliefs while the elder king was still alive, as much as seven years before his death. Indeed, any coregency theory advocating a duration of more than five years would have to deal with this unwelcome datum from Soleb Temple. In the opinion of this author, a coregency of any length can no longer be supported.

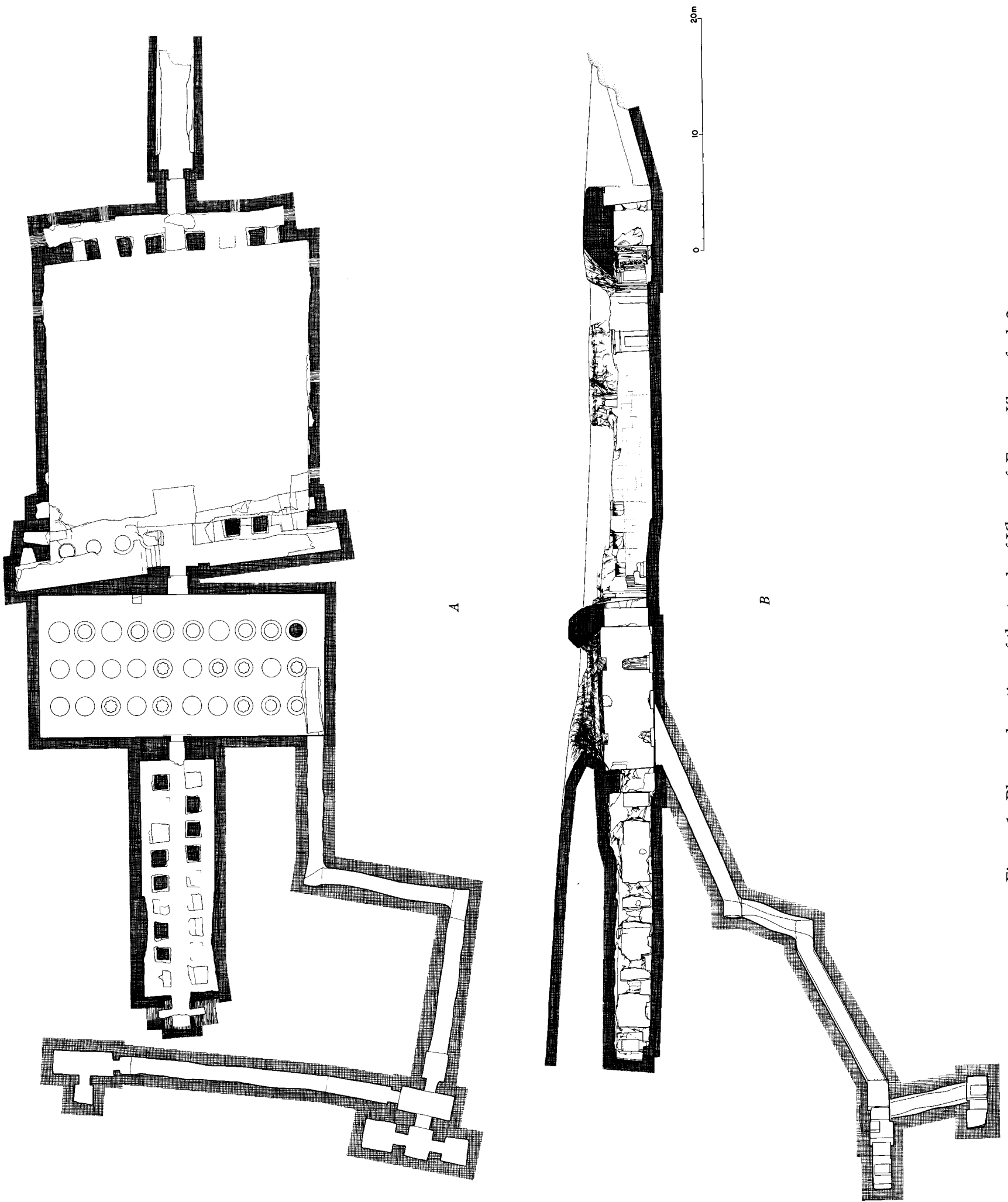


Figure 1. Plan and section of the tomb of Kheruef. From *Kheruef*, pl. 3.



Figure 2. Amenhotep IV offers a libation to his parents. From *Kheruef*, pl. 13.

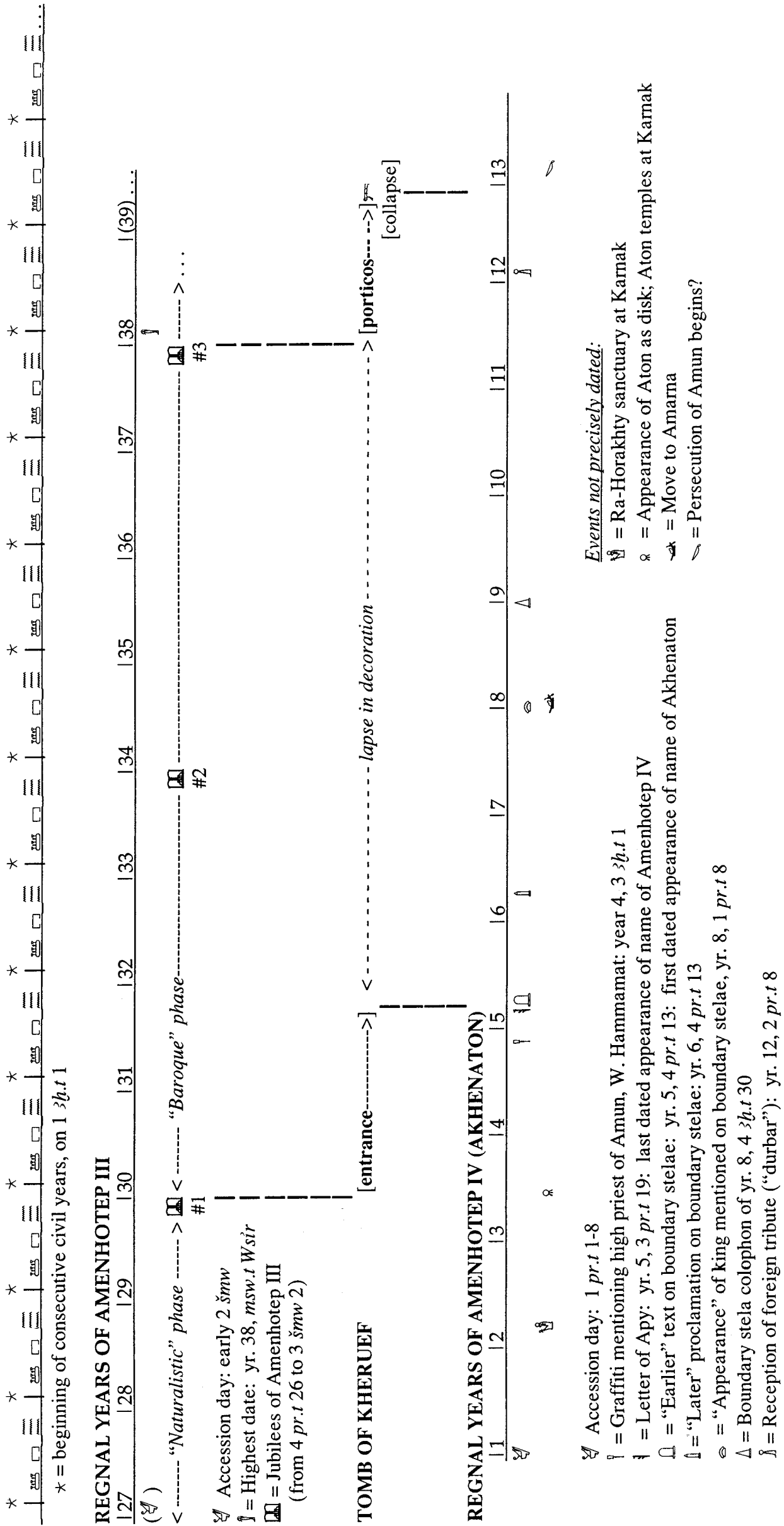


Figure 3. Schematic timeline for a hypothetical long coregency between Amenhotep III and Akhenaton.

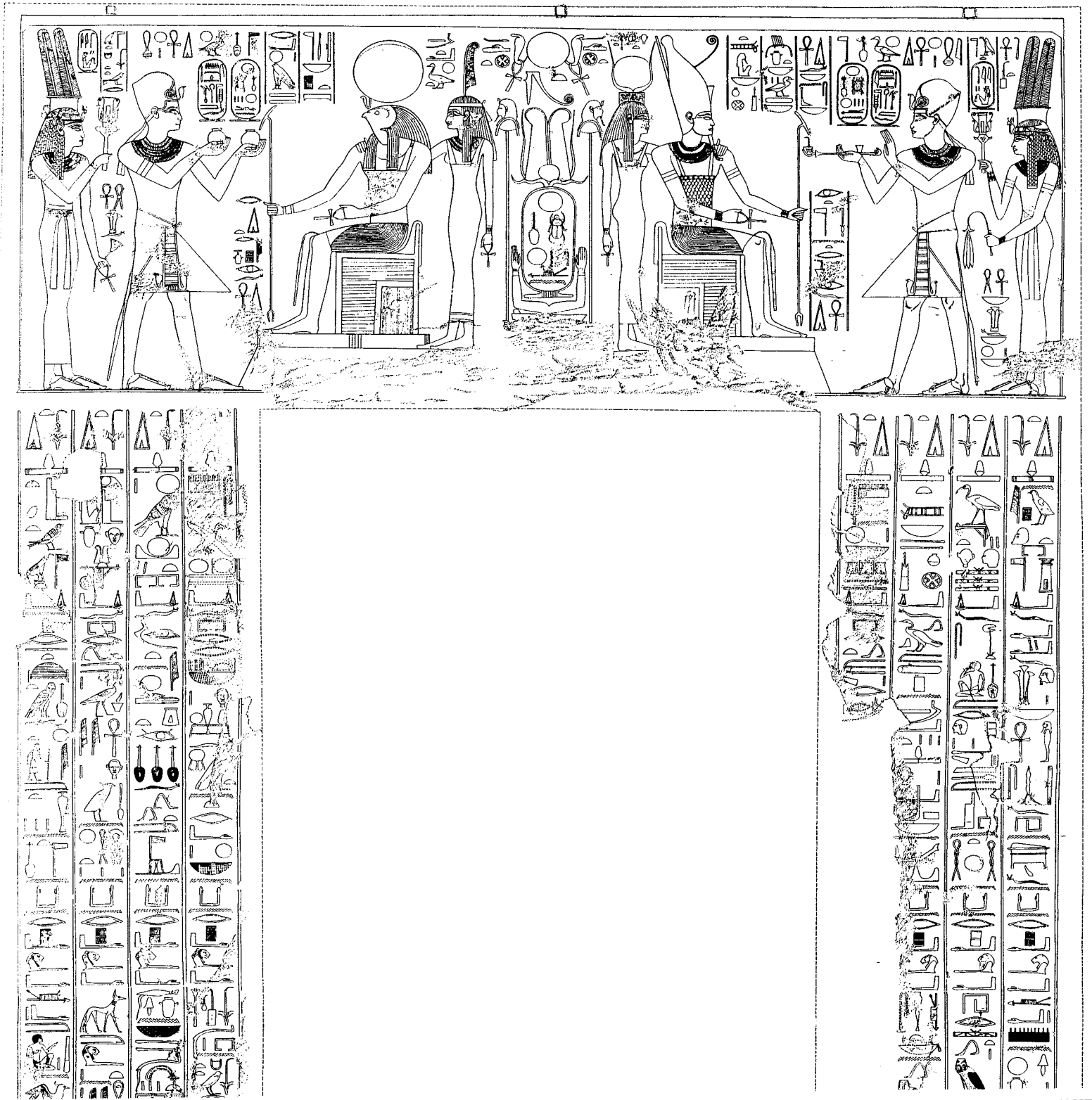


Figure 4. Lintel and upper jambs of the entrance doorway of the tomb of Kheruef. From *Kheruef*, pl. 8.

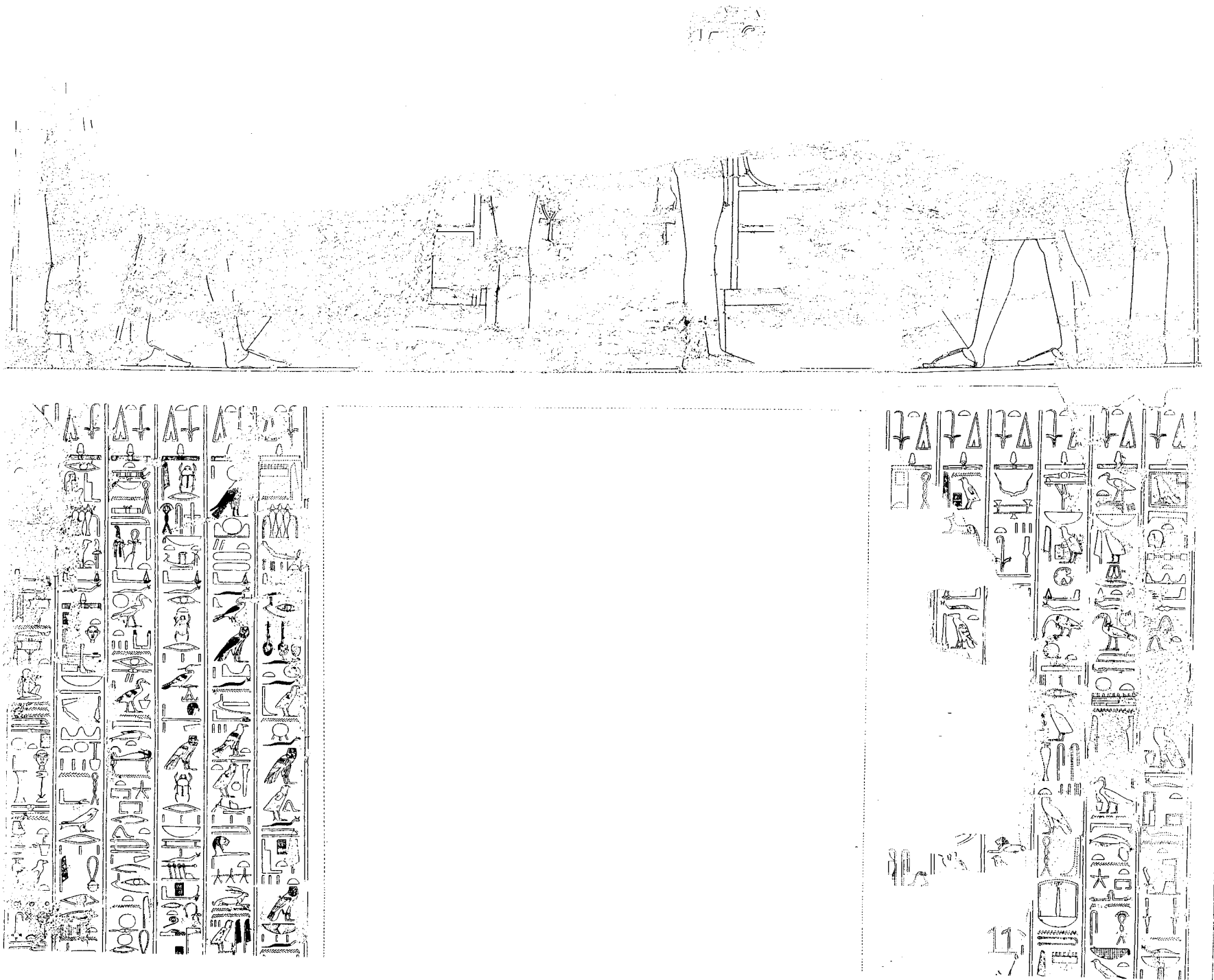


Figure 5. Lintel and upper jambs of the second doorway of the tomb of Kheruef. From *Kheruef*, pl. 67.