

A USURPED RELIEF OF TUTHMOSIS IV AT KARNAK

by Charles C. Van Siclen, III

Some ten years ago, William J. Murnane published an eighteenth dynasty scene in raised relief from the Temple of Amun at Karnak which had been restored and usurped by Ramesses II.¹ The original relief, by its location on a wall built by Tuthmosis III and by its being attacked by the followers of Akhenaten must be dated to the middle of the eighteenth dynasty, to the reigns of kings from Tuthmosis III to Amenhotep III. Prior to its publication and at Murnane's request, both Edward F. Wente and I examined the cartouche in the relief with him, but we were unable to make out the name of the original owner, allowing only that both Amenhotep II and Tuthmosis IV were possible candidates for its ownership.² This past winter I had a chance to re-examine the usurped cartouche, and upon reconsideration, I feel the cartouche, and thus the relief, can now be attributed to Tuthmosis IV.

An examination of the usurped cartouche (fig. 1) reveals some traces of the earlier name. The initial sun-disk of Ramesses II's prenomen wsr-m3't-r' belongs to the original cartouche, and faint traces of earlier hieroglyphs, the lower legs of a bpr-beetle and the upper part of a stroke, may be seen in the sun-disk and stp-sign of Ramesses II's

1. Nelson, Key Plans KC47 = PM II, 2nd ed., p.86, loc. 22² cf. "Ramesses II and His Coregency with Sety I," JNES 34 (1975), p. 182 with n. 85; fig. 21 on p. 186.

2. Ibid., n.85.

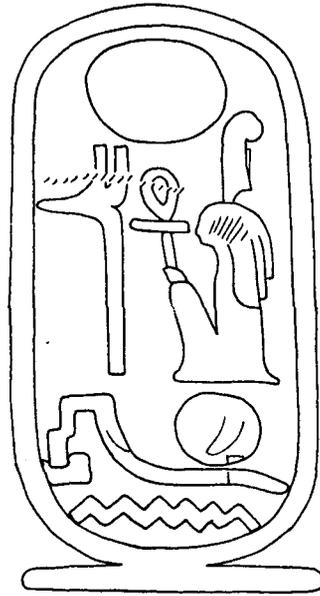


Fig. 1. The Cartouche of Tuthmosis IV usurped by
Rameses II

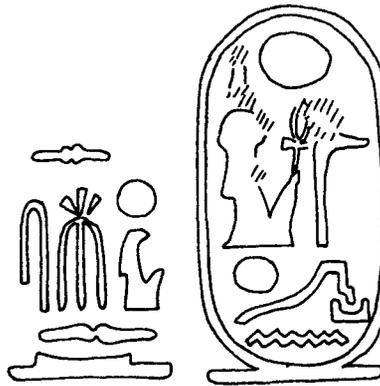


Fig. 3. The Cartouches of Rameses II from the Scene
Opposite KC 47



Fig. 2. The Head of Tuthmosis IV from KC 47

epithet stp-n-r', attesting to the earlier cartouche's ending in hprw. Furthermore, the squarish shape of the ears of the wsr-sign and the squarish projection on the right edge of the feather atop the head of the goddess Maat betray an underlying origin as playing pieces on an original mn-sign. Thus the earlier name to be read in the cartouche is mn-hprw-r', the prenomen of Tuthmosis IV.

Having ascertained the original ownership of the relief from the earlier traces within the cartouche, it is a simple matter to confirm the attribution by comparing the head of the king in the scene (fig. 2) with other known heads of Tuthmosis IV in relief. In particular, the head of Tuthmosis IV from a pillar in the Musée en plein air at Karnak, showing the king in a blue crown, is a close mirror image of the usurped relief.³ Betsy M. Bryan, who has done extensive research on the reign of Tuthmosis IV, subsequently examined this relief from Karnak and confirmed the stylistic attribution.⁴

The scene of Tuthmosis IV as originally carved showed the king facing left into the temple and receiving life from the god Amun-re, while behind the king stood the figure of a goddess (Amunet?).⁵ During the Amarna Period, the figures

3. J. Lauffray, Karnak d'Égypte, domaine du divin (Paris, 1979), fig. 95, p. 116; note especially the treatment of the eyes of the king.

4. Personal communication.

5. The scene is reproduced by Murnane, cf. note 1 above. Much of the original eighteenth dynasty text is preserved. It reads: (Before Amun) "He gives all life, all joy." (Behind Amun) "Recitation: I have given to you years of everlasting and eternity, you being established upon my

of the two deities were destroyed, and only that of Amun-re was subsequently restored. The usurpation of the cartouche in the restoration is somewhat peculiar, but Bryan has observed that the mn-sign in cartouches of Tuthmosis IV was sometimes attacked through inadvertence by the followers of Akhenaten, as possibly here,⁶ and the cartouche thus damaged may have been more liable to usurpation. This solution is not altogether necessary, however, since Ramesses II did usurp other monuments of Tuthmosis IV, such as a statue of his to be found in the Enclosure of Mut.⁷

The usurped scene of Tuthmosis IV stands to the south of the east-west axis of the Temple of Amun. The corresponding scene on the north side of the axis was never carved but was only completed in paint or outline.⁸ Of this scene only the partially carved cartouches of Ramesses II (fig. 3) are preserved in sunken relief, carved upon the now missing sporran on the kilt of a lost royal figure. One can only speculate as to whether the lost original in some less durable medium might not also be attributed to Tuthmosis IV as well.

 seat, (oh) King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Foremost of the Living, like Re forever." (Above the king) "The King of Upper and Lower Egypt, <Menkheperure>, given life, stability and dominion like Re."

6. Personal communication.

7. PM II, 2nd ed., p.271 (3).

8. The scene is without number, having been omitted by Nelson, Key Plans and PM II, 2nd ed.