Amenhotep I and Deir el-Bahri

In response to Bill Manley’s paper in JACF 2, Aidan Dodson reviews the relationship between the dramatic natural bay of Deir el-Bahri and the funerary cult of Amenhotep I. The king’s own mortuary chapel was located here, before being dismantled to accommodate the final building phase of the famous temple of Hatshepsut; this later work disturbed the tomb of his queen, Meryamun, supporting other evidence that the area served as the cemetery for Amenhotep’s immediate family.

AIDAN DODSON

Today, the site of Deir el-Bahri is dominated by the temples of the 11th Dynasty king Montuhotep II and the 18th Dynasty female pharaoh, Hatshepsut. However, remains of the works of other kings have been found there, including Amenhotep I, the second ruler of the 18th Dynasty, later revered as the patron deity of the Theban necropolis.

Recent years have seen renewed interest in the royal tombs of the early 18th Dynasty, in particular that of Amenhotep I. A number of papers have been published touching upon the subject of his funerary installations, while one of the king’s putative tombs (KV 39) is now currently being reexcavated by ISIS Research Associate John Rose.

In a paper in this journal, Bill Manley set out certain points concerning the area of Deir el-Bahri, including the presence of items bearing Amenhotep’s name; however, he failed to deal fully with the significance of the bay to the funerary installations of the king and his immediate family.

During his excavations in and around Hatshepsut’s temple, Herbert Winlock uncovered the remains of a chapel whose bricks, like those found by him dumped in a nearby quarry (and others revealed earlier by Carter and Carnarvon), bore the names of the king and his mother, Ahmose-Nefertiry.

This building (its position is indicated in Fig. 1) was rectangular, orientated just south of East-West, and had been demolished when the lower terrace was added to Hatshepsut’s great temple. It is difficult to doubt that it represents the king’s funerary chapel.

As such, it would seem reasonable to assume that it was the original location of a number of objects bearing Amenhotep’s cartouches including the well known Osirid statue of the king found by Naville near the ramp of the Montuhotep II temple (BM EA 683 - see JACF 2, p. 52), the fragmentary companions of this piece discovered by the MMA expedition nearby, and the granite remains from the Ramesside temple at the end of the Hatshepsut causeway.

Given the sanctity of their owner, it is possible that the displaced sculptures of the king were placed by Hatshepsut in the 11th Dynasty temple, perhaps alongside the Senuseret III statues already there. The pieces from the Ramesside temple will have been moved there following the abandonment and dismantling of the Montuhotep temple after the end of the 19th Dynasty.

The family of Amenhotep I

The mortuary chapel was not Amenhotep’s only link with Deir el-Bahri, for just to its north-west lies a tomb whose owner was almost certainly his queen. Numbered TT 358 in the Theban tomb series, it was excavated by Winlock and was for many years the subject of considerable debate regarding its date. The tomb lies close behind the north colonnade of Hatshepsut’s temple, parts of the foundations of which protrude into its passages; discussion centred on whether the tomb pre- or post-dated the colonnade, and this has now apparently been settled by the work of the Polish

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mission at the site. Their conclusion is that the tomb was the earlier monument - thus confirming the impression given by the form of nested coffins found in the sepulchre, owned by the 'King's Great Wife (hmt nsw wir), King's Daughter (33t nsw), and King's Sister (snt nsw)', Merytaman. This lady can thus be safely identified as Amenhotep I's wife, adding an additional facet to the installations of the reign of that king at Deir el-Bahri. The location of the king's temple together with the tomb of his wife is suggestive of the presence of other burials of his family in the general area; while none have been identified amongst the robbed-out pits investigated during the clearances of the Hatshepsut and Montuhotep temples, it is possible to propose further indirect evidence that they were formerly present in the area. This is based upon the fact that the latest New Kingdom bodies of persons other than kings in the Deir el-Bahri cache (TT 320) were those of Amenhotep I's sisters. Such evidence as exists shows that the mummies removed from later burials came from much further south, in contrast to earlier ones that had probably been laid to rest nearby, in the ancestral burial ground of Dra Abu el-Naga. This would point towards Amenhotep's relatives being buried quite near to Dra Abu el-Naga, quite possibly in the bay of Deir el-Bahri itself.

**Conclusion**

Given that the tomb of Thutmose III (KV 34) lies close to a westward extension of the axis of his own mortuary temple (which lies on the plain in front of Sheikh Abd el-Qurna), one might wonder whether the axis of Amenhotep's chapel at Deir el-Bahri could give some clue as to the much discussed location of his sepulchre. Its extended axis cuts the cliffs of the Bībān el-Molūk almost midway between the tombs of Bay (KV 13) and Amenhotep II (KV 35), an area in which only the pit of Mahirpri (KV 36) has been found. However, the validity of this exercise is very much open to question, as no temple other than that of Thutmose III appears to have any orientational connection with its tomb.

In conclusion, it may be said that Deir el-Bahri had been intended to play a central role in the funerary cult of Djoserkare (Amenhotep I); this was disrupted by the need to demolish his chapel to make way for the final extension of the temple of Hatshepsut, although Amenhotep's presence was maintained by the removal of at least some of his statues to the nearby Montuhotep temple. It is possibly that his primary cult was moved at this time to Deir el-Medina, where it was to endure for the remainder of the New Kingdom.

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**Fig. 1:** Diagram showing the relative locations of the temples of Deir el-Bahri, one of the 11th Dynasty, the others of the first half of the 18th. The foundations of the Hatshepsut Temple cut into the subterranean galleries of the early 18th Dynasty tomb of Queen Merytaman, and its lowest terrace partially encroaches on what was the site of the temple of Amenhotep I. [Illustration: A. M. Dodson]

**Notes and References**


3. Contrary to Manley's implication, these were found in a secondary position; cf. *PM* II, p. 349.


5. It appears that the original design of the Hatshepsut temple was intended to allow for the chapel to continue in existence, since the overlying lower terrace shows indications of being a relatively late addition to the plan; cf. Domman: op. cit. [4], p. 72. The building labelled as this chapel in plans such as those in *PM* I and *PM* II bears no relation to Amenhotep I's construction, since it is Whiston's reconstruction of a hypothetical original version of Hatshepsut's monument. The true form of the chapel was only revealed in general when Arnold published the MMA plans in 1979.

6. The other building often pointed out for the role - the temple of Amenhotep I and Ahmose-Nefertari in front of Dra Abu el-Naga - has been discussed by C. C. Van Siclen: 'The Temple of Menes at Thebes' in *Scarpia* 6 (1980), pp. 117-207. He concludes that it represents a 'cult place of the god Amun, having a special association with the deified Ahmose-Nefertari (and a distinctly minor role for the deified Amenhotep I)' (p. 194).


8. Could their installation have been the occasion for works in the 11th Dynasty temple that may be commemorated by two objects commonly found in foundation deposits - a calcite shell (Liverpool M 11929), and a dish (Stockholm MM 14383)? cf. A. M. Dodson: 'Hatshepsut and "Her Faber" Mentuhotep II' in *JEA* 75 (1989), pp. 224-26; and B. J. Peterson: 'Hatshepsut and Nebhepetre Mentuhotep' in *CJE* 42/4 (1967), pp. 266-68. I am grateful to William Kelly Simpson for pointing out this later reference.
12. The scale of the outer coffin(s) is paralleled only by those of Ahhotep and Ahmose-Neferity, the wives of Taa II and Ahmose respectively, although its material and technique clearly places it later than them.
13. On the debate over the identities of the various royal ladies of the late-17th/early-18th Dynasties, see the references given to L. Troy: *Patterns of Queenship in Ancient Egyptian Myth and History* (Uppsala, 1986), pp. 161-62 [18.2, 18.9]. It is clear that 'Ahhotep II', long listed as a spouse of Amenhotep I, never existed.
15. From the reign of Thutmose III we have the tombs of Hatshepsut (in Wadi Sitkak Taqa el-Ziede), and Neferure (†) and the 'Three Princesses' (in Wadi Qubbanat el-Qirud). Various princes and princesses of this and later reigns are known from canopic fragments which appear to have come from the area of the Biban el-Himm; cf. A. M. Dodson & J. J. Janssen: 'A Theban Tomb and its Tenants' in *JEA* 75 (1989), pp. 125-38, especially pp. 137-38; A. M. Dodson: 'Crown Prince Djutmose and the Royal Sover of the 18th Dynasty' in *JEA* 76 (1990), forthcoming.
17. The earliest item to be recovered from the temple of Amenhotep I and Ahmose-Neferity located at Deir el-Medina was the superb milky-white statuette of Thutmose III (PE 43507A); for details cf. *PM I*, p. 643.

The three main temples viewed from the south ridge of the great natural bay of Deir el-Bahari. In the foreground is the Temple of Montuhotep, above and to the back, that of Thutmose III, and beyond, the Temple of Hatshepsut. Amenhotep I's temple was built within the northern extension of the Middle Kingdom enclosure and later covered by the first terrace of Hatshepsut's temple. [Photo: D. Rohlf]

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