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The Unidentified Temple Scene in TT 55.

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Abstract

This paper investigated the unidentified temple scene in TT 55 of Ramose that dates back to the reign of King Akhenaten, and located in Sheik Abd El-Qurnah necropolis, the main aim of this paper is to identify the temple scene in this tomb. In order to achieve this aim, the researcher used historical, descriptive, and interpretative approaches in order to make a complete, detailed description of observation of the unidentified temple scene, also, to compare the temple scene to others located in Tell El-Amarna Necropolis. All previous methodologies enabled the researcher to identify the temple scene. Therefore, the importance of this paper is the identification of the unknown temple scene in TT 55.

KeyWords: Temple scenes- Ramose, TT 55- 18th dynasty- Iconographic Sources- Structure Scenes.

Introduction

Temples are one of the most critical structures in ancient Egypt. Some temples were destroyed due to many reasons; reusing, erosion factors, and others. Fortunately, there are temple scenes upon the tombs' scene. However, they are occasionally represented inside the tomb. They are significant as it enables us to imagine how a certain temple was. Most of the temple scenes were identified with the accompanying inscriptions of the temple scenes. Nevertheless, few temple scenes were unidentified for two reasons; the absence of the accompanying inscription, and the destruction of some parts of the temple scenes.

The unidentified temple scene is located within the tomb of , *R^c-ms* (Rank: 1935), Ramose, TT 55, which dates back to the reign of the King Amenhotep IV of the 18th dynasty (PM: 1960). The tomb located in Sheik Abd El-Qurnah, in plain, between hills and Ramesseum; North of TT 57, South of TT 53. Ramose was the governor of the town and the vizier of the King (Gardiner: 1992). The scene is represented upon the west wall, north side of the hall (fig.1). The tomb of Ramose is left unfinished.

Moreover, the tomb is unique in having two styles of art; the paintings, and reliefs. Furthermore, the tomb represents two phases of art; the art before the Amarna period, and the art of the Amarna Art, this is obvious in themes represented within the tomb (Davies: 1941). The research is mainly based on identifying unknown temple scene inside the tomb by investigating the context of the scene and similar ones in different tombs, in addition to analysis of the iconography of the temple scene.

Methodology

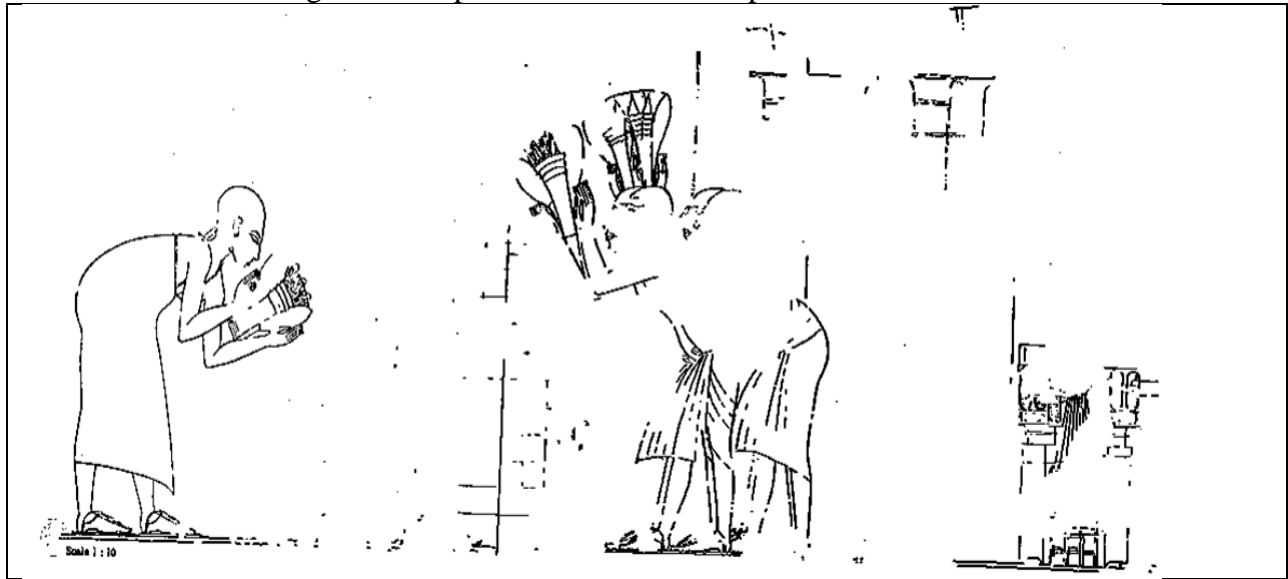
The researcher used the historical and descriptive approach that aims for a complete, detailed description of observation of the unidentified temple scene in TT 55. Furthermore, comparing the temple scene with other temple scenes in Tell El-Amarna that share the same iconography and context.

Scene Description

Ramose is represented in a panted position receiving a bouquet from the priest of the god Aten temple. The complements exchanged inscriptions between Ramose, and the priests are not recorded. The temple represented by its pylon that has a low gateway. The doors of the pylon are

opened, and the sun god Aten in the sky, sending his rays down to bless or receive the offerings set there (Davies: 1941) (fig. 1).

Fig. 1: The representation of the temple of Aten in TT 55

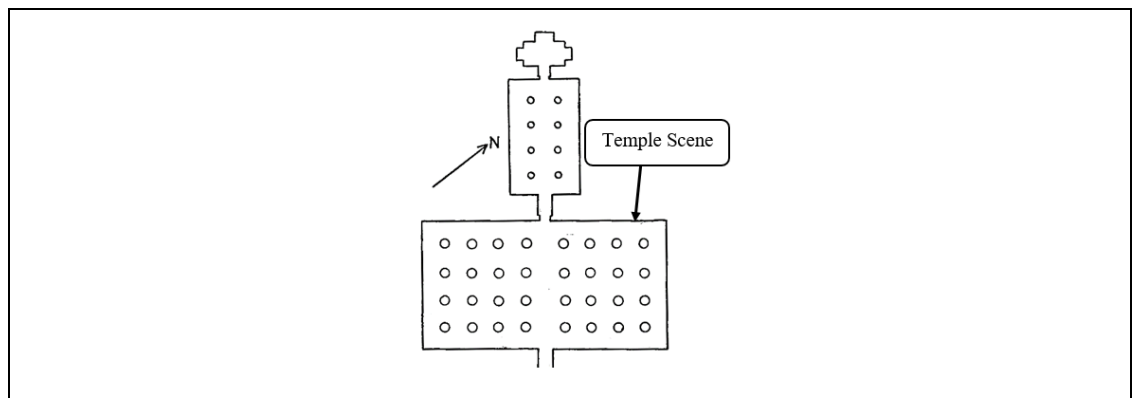


After: Davies, N. de Garis. *The Tomb of the Vizier Ramose*. Pl., 38.

Scene Context

The temple scene is represented upon the west wall, of the northern side of the columned hall within the tomb. It has two registers; the 1st register represented the deceased while he is being rewarded, and is being accompanied by attendants and courtiers. The 2nd register represented the deceased while is receiving courtiers and foreign delegates (Nubians, Asiatic, and Libyan). Then followed by the temple scene, which represented the deceased while he is receiving bouquets from the priests of the Temple (PM: 1960) (fig. 2).

Fig. 2: The Tomb Design of TT 55, and the temple scene location



After: PM., Vol.1, p. 106.

Hypotheses of identification

The absence of the accompanying texts of this scene because of the bad state of preservation of the tomb, makes it difficult to distinguish which temple of the god Aten represented here? It could be the temple of god Aten at Karnak complex “*gm p3 itn*” because Davies has suggested that Ramose may stay in his post as the governor of the town (Thebes) “*Imy-r niwt*” (Davies:

1941). He defended his supposition as Ramose has not been mentioned in Tell Amarana at all. Moreover, Akenaten would need Ramose to continue in his post to control Thebes after the immigration to El Amarna (Davies: 1941). Therefore, Ramose may receive this bouquet in the temple of Aten at Karnak Complex “*gm-p3-itn*.” Nevertheless, The pylon of the temple represented here looks like that of the grand temple of god Aten in Tell El-Amarna (Fig. 4). The iconography of the pylon is so similar to that represented in Akhenaten’s tomb and his high officials’ tombs in Tell El-Amarna. The researcher investigated the context of temple scene in Tell El-Amarna tombs. He noticed that there is a theme for the reward scene of the tomb owner, which spread in Tell El-Amarna Tombs; the artist in most cases represented the temple and palace upon the same wall; one on each side of the wall and in between of them. The procession of tomb owner is represented; some times the procession starts from the palace where King Akhenaten rewards the high official- Tomb owner- then the procession moves towards the temple of god Aten and meets with foreign delegations, when he reaches the temple, the high official offer offerings to the god Aten as a kind of gratitude. The theme was first represented in TT 55 of Ramose of the early reign of King Akhenaten. Moreover, the accompanying inscriptions beside the temple are the same as the palace (Fig. 3).


Fig. 3: The context of the palace and temple scenes inside the Tell el-Amarna tombs

The Same wall		
Palace Scene (the inscription beside it is almost/ typical that besides the temple)	Procession (direction of the procession maybe inverted from that scene to another) ←————→	Temple of God Aten (the inscription beside it is almost/ typical that besides the palace)

by the researcher

The context of temple scene in TT 55 is similar to the context as mentioned earlier of temple scene; a palace most probable Malkata palace¹ as Davies suggested (Davies: 1941), King Akentaton accompanied by his wife Queen Nefertiti, the former rewarded Ramose. After rewarding Ramose, he left the palace and accompanied by courtiers and attends towards the temple of god Aten (unidentified temple). Therefore, the context of the temple scene in this tomb is similar to those in Tell El-Amarna tombs².

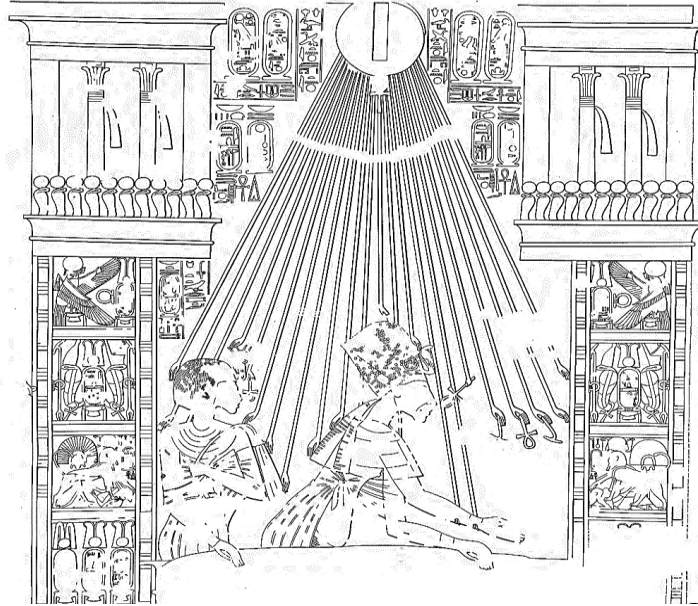
The accompanying inscriptions beside the palace scene, which is the counterpart scene to the temple scene in TT 55 can be read as follows:


 “*Itn nḥ wr imy ḥb nb pt ʿ3 ḥry ib gm p3 Itn m pr itn,*” “*life for the god Aten,*


¹ For more information about Malkata palace. See, Shubert, Steven B. “Thebes, Malkata” *Encyclopedia of The Archaeology Of Ancient Egypt*. Edited by Kathryn A. Bard, and Steven Blake Shubert. Routledge, 2005, pp. 980-983.; O'Connor, David. "Malqata." *Lexikon der Agyptologie III*, edited by Wolfgang Helckand, and Wolfhart Westendorf, LÄ, Vol 3, 1980, pp. 1174-1177.

² The context of reward scene and visiting the temple scene were counterpart scenes during reign of King Akenaton. See, Davies, N. de Garis. *The Tombs of Panehesy and Merira II*. London, 1905, p. 37, PL. 35, 36; Davies, N. de Garis. *The rocket tombs of Tell El Tell El-Amarna*. Vol, 6. (London: EES, 1908). Pl.29.

Fig 3: Akhenaten and Nefertiti at the window of the appearance in Malkata palace (TT 55).



As mentioned before the researcher noticed that the accompanying inscriptions to the palace scene are the same to that accompanying to the temple scene, for example, in the tomb of Ay in Tell El-Amarna the accompanying inscriptions to the temple and the palace can be read as follows:

 , Itn ḥd wr imy ḥb nb šnw nb pt nb t3 m pr itn
m 3ḫt itn” “Aten, the great white, lord of the festival, lord of the circuit. Aten, lord of Aten lord of the sky, lord of the land, in the temple of Aten, in Akhetaton (Tell El-Amarna)” (fig. 2.19).

offerings and showing gratitude to the god Aten in his temple Gem-Pa-Aten - “*gm-p3-Itn*”- at Karnak complex.

Conclusion

The absence of the accompanying inscriptions beside the temples scene makes it hard to identify the temple scene in TT 55. Nevertheless, by investigating the context of the scene, comparing the temple scene to its similar ones at Tell El-Amarna, in addition to Davies suggestions for the palace represented inside the tomb as Malkata palace, and his supposition of the continuation of Ramose in his occupation as governor of the tomb, and the supposition of the researcher that the accompanying inscriptions to the temple scenes are the same for the temple, it can be concluded that the unidentified temple scene in TT 55 is a representation for the temple of god Aten (*gm-p3-itn*) that located North of Karnak complex.

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