

The Ramsesnakht Dynasty and the Fall of the New Kingdom: A New Monument in Thebes

von

Daniel Polz

(Tafel 7-14)

Abstract

From 1993-96, the joint archaeological project of the German Institute of Archaeology, Cairo (DAI) and the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) partially excavated a large tomb in the hillside of Dra' Abu el-Naga on the Theban West Bank. The architecture, archaeological record, and objects found thus far indicate that the tomb had at least two major construction and use phases. The original construction of the tomb probably dates back to the late 17th or early 18th dynasties. The second phase includes an extensive remodeling of the complex and can be attributed to a high official of the late 20th dynasty, the Hihg Priest of Amun, Ramsesnakht. The present article is a first attempt to interpret the results of the 1993-96 field seasons when the inside of the tomb and half of both its forecourts were excavated. The emphasis will be on the Ramesside constructions and re-use of the tomb and the possible historical implications¹.

1 Introduction

The identification and excavation of the royal tombs of the 17th and early 18th dynasties are among the major goals of the DAI-UCLA excavation project². Despite several efforts

¹ This article is a revised and enlarged version of the „SSEA Lecture in Memory of Faith Stanley" which was originally delivered at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto in October 1995. The article was finished in November of 1996. I wish to express my gratitude to the SSEA, and to Ronald J. Leprohon, Roberta L. Shaw, and Guy Stanley. I am especially indebted to Michael Cooperson, Andrea M. Gnirs, Heike Guksch, and Lynn Swartz for many helpful discussions and comments.

² See the preliminary reports, D. Polz, in: MDAIK 48, 1992, 109-130; idem, in: MDAIK 49, 1993, 227-138; idem, in: MDAIK 51, 1995, 207-225; see also: idem, in: SAGA 12, 1995, 25-42; idem, in: *Egyptian Archaeology*, vol. 7, 1995, 6-8.

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over the past one hundred years, none of these royal tombs has ever been positively identified. The prevailing opinion holds that the royal tombs of the Second Intermediate Period are located somewhere in the Dra' Abu el-Naga area, probably in the plain. The main reason for this assumption is that, since the 1820's, a substantial quantity of royal funerary equipment has been found in this area³. In most of these cases there have been neither detailed reports of associated tomb contexts nor any mention of substantial architecture containing the objects⁴. It is thus probable that the discovery sites of most of the royal coffins – especially those found by Mariette's workmen⁵ – were not the original tombs but rather secondary caches in which the objects were hidden by tomb-robbers.

Regarding the royal burials of the later 17th Dynasty, there is little doubt that substantial architectural environment must have existed. Some of the wooden coffins found in the Dra' Abu el-Naga area are exceptionally large⁶ – too large to be lowered into shafts and chambers of the usual size. Additionally, all the archaeological field work in Dra' Abu el-Naga⁷ demonstrates that objects made of organic material in tombs in the plain cannot survive. These tombs in the plain are subject to periodic flooding when heavy rains cause a runoff in the *wadis*. Our previous excavations in the Dra' Abu el-Naga plain have shown that heavy rainfalls during New Kingdom times caused all the organic objects in the tombs' chambers to decay⁸. Therefore, had the wooden coffins of the 17th dynasty kings and queens been interred in the plain, they never would have survived intact until modern times.

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³ For an excellent overview of the earlier *Forschungsgeschichte*, see: H.E. Winlock, in: JEA 10, 1924, 217-77; see also: M. Dewachter, in: RdE 36, 1985, 43-66.

⁴ The only exception may be the tomb of king Nubkheperre Intef (V) whose obviously untouched coffin was found in „a small and separate tomb, containing only one chamber, in the center of which was placed a sarcophagus, hewn out the same rock, and formed evidently at the same time as the chamber itself; its base not having been detached. In this sarcophagus was found the above mentioned case, with the body as originally deposited". For this and the problems connected with the identification of that coffin see: Dewachter, op.cit., 44-49. Cf.: Winlock, op.cit., 229-30.

⁵ Winlock, op.cit., 226-37.

⁶ Ahhotep („II"): 3.12 meters, Ahmes Nefertari: 3.78 meters, Ahmes Meritamun: 3.13 meters; see: B. Schmitz, in: CdE 53, 1978, 207-209.

⁷ H. Gauthier, in: BIFAO VI, 1908, 122; Lord Carnarvon and H. Carter, *Five Years' Explorations at Thebes*, 1912, 55. For a detailed description of the archaeological history of the site, see: D. Polz, *Dra' Abu el-Naga 1990-1994, The Private Necropolis*, chapter 2.2. (in preparation).

⁸ D. Polz, in: MDAIK 48, 1992, 119.

There are, however, a few rather meager hints to the relative position of these royal tombs. In addition to the problematic references in pAbbott⁹, the notebooks of Sir Gardner Wilkinson, who traveled extensively in Egypt, contain frequent mentions of the coffins of Wepmaat Intef (VI) and Herihermaat Intef (VII). In one of Wilkinson's notebooks, dated to the year 1855, he mentions that „*The Enentef coffins came from Dra' Abu el-Naga all way up the hill*“¹⁰. He added a little sketch of the tomb's plan which seems to indicate that the tomb consists of a vertical shaft („well“), an adjacent passage, and a burial chamber in which the two coffins were lying.

Based on this source and additional information provided by Friederike Kampp¹¹, several short surveys were conducted in the Dra' Abu el-Naga hillside in 1990 and 1991. Four (or perhaps five) large rock tombs close to the top of the hill that partially match Wilkinson's description were identified. Excavations in one of these tombs, K93.11, began in 1993 and continue today. Work in the second, K94.1, which lies immediately below the hilltop, was completed in 1994¹².

The excavation of tomb K93.11, which is the topic of this article, is still far from being completed. To date, it has not yielded irrefutable proof of the identity of the original owner of the tomb. However, sufficient indications show that there were at least two major phases of building activities: the first, or original construction phase of the tomb, presumably dating to the end of the Second Intermediate Period or the early 18th dynasty, and a later second phase of remodeling and re-use during the second half of the 20th dynasty.

2 Tomb complex K93.11 at Dra' Abu el-Naga

2.1 The original construction of the tomb complex

The excavation area lies on the southern slope of the northernmost hillside at Dra' Abu el-Naga, above the first houses of the modern village and shortly below the hilltop (plate 7).

⁹ For a discussion of the pAbbott „data“, see: D. Polz, *The Location of the Tomb of Amenhotep I: A Reconsideration*, in: R. Wilkinson (ed.), *Valley of the Sun Kings*, 1995, 8-21.

¹⁰ Wilkinson MSS. XII 79, middle; the notebook has the title: „1855 - No. I Egypt Wilkinson“. Wilkinson's notebooks are kept in the Bodleian Library in Oxford; cf.: PM I, 2² 603.

¹¹ As a result of her thorough survey of the Theban Necropolis, Friederike Kampp suggested that some of these tombs could have been royal burial places of the 17th dynasty (personal communication, summer 1988); see now: F. Kampp, *Die Thebanische Nekropole*, Theben XIII, 1996, 34-39.

¹² Obviously, tomb K94.1 has been excavated before, most probably by Howard Carter in the early 1920's. A positive identification of the original tomb owner was not possible. The most important results of our re-excavation were: 1) the unusual dimensions of the tomb shaft, which is more than 17 meters deep; 2) the finding of some early 18th Dynasty pottery samples in the shaft which are apparently already mentioned in Carter's note-books; and 3) scant remains of a mud brick structure above the tomb which might have been a pyramid. For a preliminary report see: S.T. Smith, in: MDAIK 51, 1995, 223-225.

The excavation area includes two unusually large, rectangular courts separated by a huge east-west wall cut out of the bedrock¹³. Both courts are then further subdivided into two halves by north-south stone-cut pylons. The facades of both tomb complexes open into rock-cut chambers with entirely different ground plans.

Neither the courts nor the inside of the southern tomb K93.12 have been excavated yet; they are still covered with several meters of debris. At this point, therefore, the description of the tomb's exterior and interior architecture must remain rather vague¹⁴. It is clear, however, that both tombs open out to the East and look out across an inner and outer court, partially held up against the rocky hillside by a massive retaining wall. This retaining wall is a remarkable construction and must have been a notable landmark during the New Kingdom. It stretches along the entire length of the two tomb complexes K93.11 and K93.12 and was used to artificially enlarge the eastern courts of both tombs. Its dimensions are truly exceptional; originally the wall had a length of more than 50 meters and a height of roughly 10 meters (see the arrow on plate 7). Beside its function as a retaining wall, it also served as a dump for the large limestone blocks which were produced during the original cutting of the two courts, the inner chambers, and the subterranean parts of the tombs. Likewise, the smaller limestone chips and flakes produced during the construction were used as filling material for the artificial terrace.

The interior of the southern tomb K93.12 resembles a Middle Kingdom „corridor type" tomb ground plan. It has a long corridor or passage leading to a chamber from which the (or one of the) burial shafts would descend.

Substantial remains of a huge mud brick construction sit above and approximately in the axis of the tomb. A test trench there revealed the south-east corner of a square or slightly rectangular building which on the level of its base was surrounded by large sandstone paving slabs, several of which were found *in situ*. This architectural situation closely resembles the mud brick pyramids that top the rock-cut tombs of the Ramesside officials whose tombs are built in the hills of Dra' Abu el-Naga/South, approximately 400 meters south of our tombs¹⁵.

The excavation of the northern tomb complex K93.11 has been the main goal of the last four seasons in the field (1993-96). From these excavations, a preliminary description of the tomb's original layout can be attempted:

¹³ See the plan in: S.T. Smith, in: MDAIK 51, 1995, Abb. 2, Areal E.

¹⁴ For a brief description and ground plan of the court and the tomb's entrance, see: Kampp, *op.cit.*, 692-93, fig. 607.

¹⁵ C.S. Fisher, in: University of Pennsylvania, *The Museum Journal* 15, 1924, 28-49; L. Bell, in: *Expedition* vol. 10,2, 1968, 38-47; vol. 11,3, 1969, 26-37.

The second or inner court of the tomb complex, and the pylon on its eastern side are completely cut out of the rock. The facade of the tomb, and both the north and south walls of the court and the pylon seem to have been covered or cased with mud brick walls, apparently in order to hide the natural rock face, which is of extremely poor quality everywhere on the hillside. Of the first or outer court only the western half is rock-cut; its eastern half is constructed as an artificial terrace, with the gigantic, sloped retaining wall supporting its eastern side.

The investigations of the retaining wall clarify the construction history of the entire double tomb complex:

First, the wall and the artificial terrace were planned and executed at the same time. The initial design included the excavation of both tombs as well as the construction of their artificially enlarged courts using the retaining wall as a way to dispose of the tomb's excavation debris.

Second, immediately in front of and to the east of the north part of the wall, there are remains of a small mud brick pyramid¹⁶. This pyramid would never have survived had the retaining wall been erected *after* the pyramid. Fortunately, we have the possibility of dating the construction of the pyramid. Most of its bricks are stamped with the title and the name of the „major of Thebes, Amunemhab“, owner of the „lost“ tomb TT A8¹⁷. As this tomb dates to the very end of the 18th or the beginning of the 19th dynasties, the retaining wall must have been built *prior* to this period, that is, before the end of the 18th dynasty.

The inner chapel of tomb K93.11 is an unusual type of rock-cut tomb. The facade opens into a small entrance passage, followed by a large hall with four pillars, and a small, unfinished chapel at the back (fig. 1). The walls of the interior rooms are roughly cut and uneven. Nowhere are there any remains of decoration or casing stones left, except for a few *in situ* fragments of sandstone pavement slabs in one of the corners of the entrance passage. These cannot yet be ascribed to either of the two main construction phases with any amount of certainty.

¹⁶ See: D. Polz, in: MDAIK 51, 1995, pl. 47a.

¹⁷ The inscription on the brick stamps reads: *ḥ3tj-ḥ Jmn-m-ḥ3t n nywt*, a title which is - among others - also found in the inscriptions of Amunemhab's tomb (cf. Helck, Verwaltung, 422 and 526-27; L. Manniche, Lost Tombs, 1988, 47-49, with further bibliography), on the two known different cone-stamps (Davies/Macadam, Funerary Cones, nos. 532 and 554), and on a statue group of Amunemhab, his mother, and his wife in St. Petersburg/Russia (N. Landa/I. Lapis, Egyptian Antiquities in the Hermitage, 1974, no. 51). Meanwhile, the tomb of Amunemhab has been re-discovered: it is located in the axis of and approximately 35-40 meters east and below the pyramid.

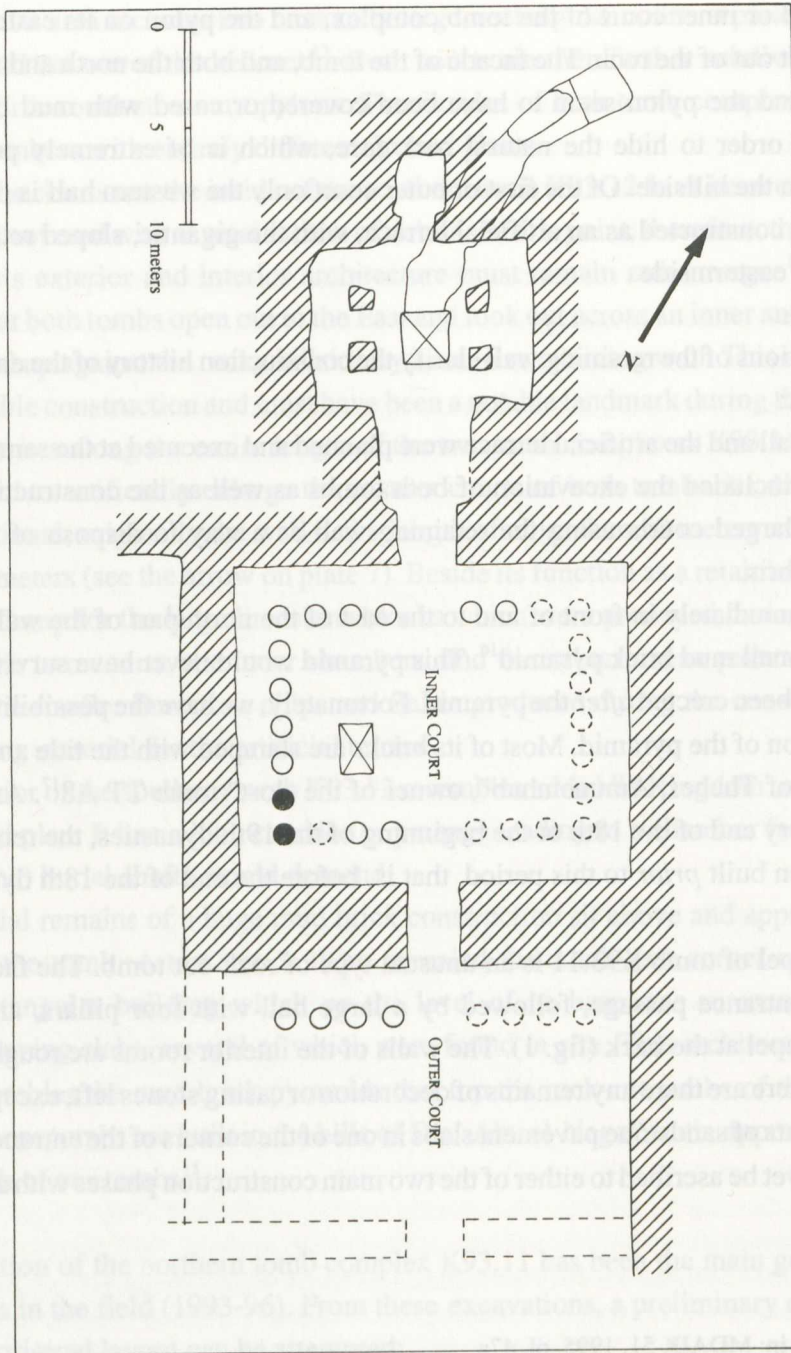


Fig. 1: Preliminary plan of tomb complex K93.11 (scale 1:400)

Between the four pillars a vertical shaft with rather unusual dimensions (3.5 by 2.5 meters wide) descends 10 meters into the rock. The bottom of the shaft opens into a horizontal passage approximately 20 meters long and far more than man-size in height and width (2.4 meters by 2.6 meters). This passage leads to a small chamber at its northern end. In front of the chamber lies the burial place proper, an anthropoid recess sunk into the floor¹⁸. This recess was coated with white lime plaster and once certainly contained a sarcophagus or coffin. It was originally covered with large, well cut sandstone slabs, fragments of which were found in the passage. Approximately the last third of the passage, including the small chamber and the recess, was once closed by a wall of neatly cut blocks of fine limestone¹⁹ that were coated on the outside with a layer of mud. Remains of the mud are still extant on the walls and the ceiling of the passage; they prove that the chamber was once indeed used for a burial. Except for the sandstone and limestone blocks, the passage was found almost empty of artifacts; it had apparently been cleaned by the *Service des Antiquités* during the early 1920's²⁰.

A second large shaft with almost identical dimensions was found outside the tomb roughly in the middle of the southern half of the second court. Here, only the shaft itself was finished; work on the apparently planned passage to the north was abandoned after only one meter²¹.

To date, there have been no *in situ* finds of any substantial decoration in any part of the tomb complex during this first phase. However, among the large number of decorated sandstone fragments discovered in the inner court, four rather intriguing pieces were found in its southern half. Judging by the content and the peculiar style of

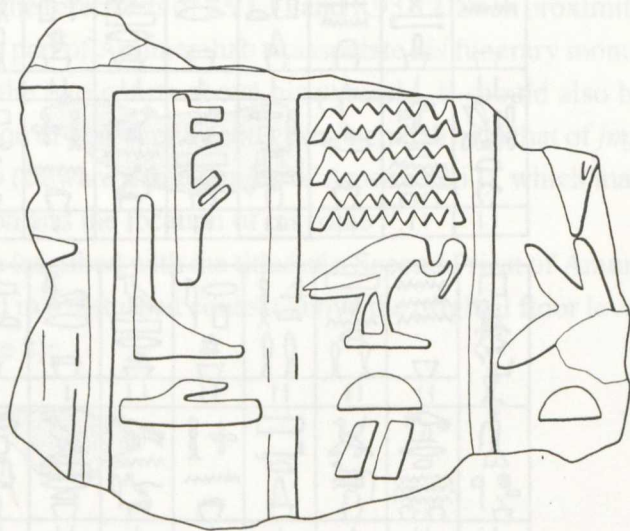


Fig. 2: Sandstone fragment with remains of an offering list (scale 1:2, drawing: U. Rummel)

¹⁸ See: D. Polz, in: MDAIK 51, 1995, pl. 46; idem, in: Egyptian Archaeology 7, 1995, illustration on 8.

¹⁹ Similarly cut blocks were recently found in the debris of the burial chamber of the tomb of Amenhotep III. They were also used to block the entrance to the burial chamber(s) (personal communication of Jiri Kondo, spring 1996).

²⁰ D. Polz, in: MDAIK 51, 1995, 216.

²¹ The unfinished passage and a later excavated small „cave“ were re-used during the Third Intermediate Period as burial places for three individuals in wooden coffins of rather modest sizes.

their decoration, they all belonged to a single architectural entity. All four show remains of several columns with the depiction of various items and numerals of two offering lists (fig. 2 and plate 9). For three reasons, these fragments do not seem to belong to the later Ramesside construction: first, the sandstone is distinctively darker and coarser than the stone used for the Ramesside decoration²². Second, the decorated surface of the fragments is very worn and weathered, indicating that the decoration must have been exposed to the open air for a much longer time than the Ramesside sandstone. Third, both the column dividers and the hieroglyphs are executed in raised relief, whereas the hieroglyphs of the Ramesside decoration are, without exception, carved in sunk relief. Thus, we can at least assume that an earlier sandstone relief program at one time was part of the tomb complex.

The preserved fragments contain parts of Barta's offering list „Type C" which is an abbreviated version of the longer Old Kingdom lists and is attested from Middle Kingdom through the early New Kingdom times, becoming rare during later New Kingdom times²³. Fig. 3 is adapted from Barta and shows a schematic version of this type of offering list, indicating those parts which are preserved on the fragments from K93.11.

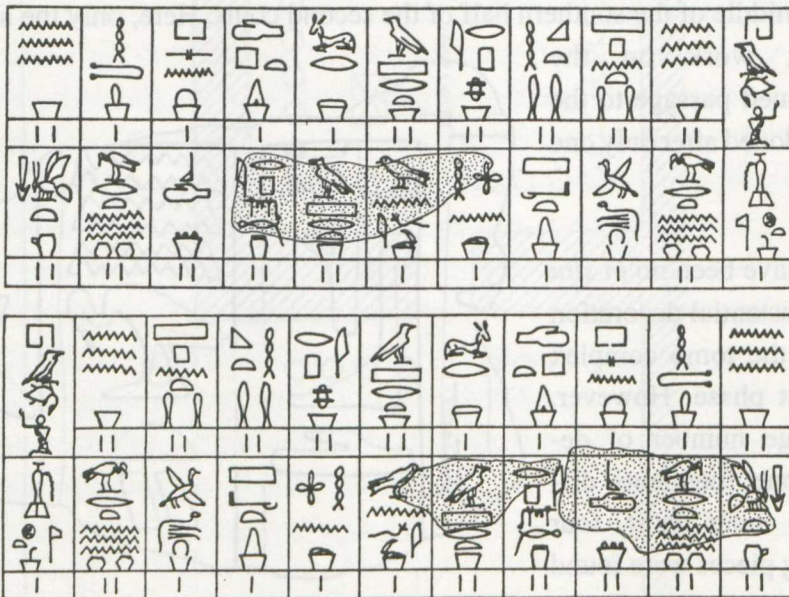


Fig. 3: Schematic drawing (after Barta, *Opferliste*, 183, Abb. 6) of a „type C" offering list indicating the parts preserved on sandstone fragments from K93.11

²² Cf. the interesting statement that, for his monuments, Mentuhotep II preferred a gray-brown to brown-violet sandstone over the far more common sandstone of lighter color; this darker variation of sandstone is mainly found in the quarries of Wadi Shatt er-Rigale and Nag el-Hammam, which latter shows remains of intensive quarry activities during Middle Kingdom times. See: R. Klemm/D. Klemm, *Steine und Steinbrüche im Alten Ägypten*, 1993, 227 and 238-41.

²³ Barta, *Opferliste*, 111-128 and 164-65 (m-p).

2.2 Use of the tomb complex between the two major construction phases

A noteworthy group of objects, mainly found in the debris of the inner court, indicate that the complex was used to some extent after the time of its original construction but before the late Ramesside remodeling. Among these objects were:

- A rather large amount of early 18th dynasty pottery found in the lowest layers of debris in both courts.
- The lower part of a limestone stela donated by the well-known scribe of the necropolis under Ramses II, Qenherkhepeshef²⁴. The identification is beyond doubt because the text on the stela also mentions Qenherkhepeshef's *true* father, Panakht²⁵.
- A substantial number of mud bricks stamped with the title and name of the vizier Paser (owner of tomb TT 106) who held the vizirate during the first third of the reign of Ramses II. The stamp type seems to be the same as the one used on the bricks found in the forecourt of Paser's tomb at Sheikh Abd el-Qurna, which is different from the type that was used for the construction of his pyramid²⁶.
- The location of the above-mentioned mud brick pyramid of Amunemhab, mayor of Thebes (TT A8), is intriguing. It was built a very small distance from the huge retaining wall that forms the eastern edge of the forecourts of K93.11 and K93.12. Such proximity may perhaps reflect a desire on the part of Amunemhab to associate his funerary monument with the ritual activities of the two courts above his pyramid. It should also be noted that, in addition to his position of mayor of Thebes, Amunemhab held that of *jmj-r3 pr m hwt Dsr-k3-r*^c var. *Jmn-htp* (steward in the temple of Amenhotep I), which may indicate a link between his position and the location of his tomb²⁷.
- The upper part of a limestone stela inscribed with the titles of a Second Priest of Amun, whose name is missing, was found in a disturbed context above the original floor level in front of the tomb's facade (plate 8):

²⁴ See: M. Bierbrier, *The Late New Kingdom in Egypt*, 1975, 26-29.

²⁵ On several monuments, Qenherkhepeshef's „father" is the likewise well-known scribe of the necropolis, Ramose, who was the husband of the famous Naunakhte and the owner of three tombs in Deir el-Medine. Ramose may have been Qenherkhepeshef's teacher and tutor, and predecessor in the position of scribe of the necropolis; see Bierbrier, *op.cit.*; idem, *The Tomb-Builders of the Pharaohs*, 1982, 32-35.

²⁶ F. Kampp, *Die Thebanische Nekropole, Theben XIII*, 1996, 385. The publication of Paser's tomb by J. Assmann, E. Hofmann, F. Kampp, and K.-J. Seyfried (*Theben X*) is in preparation.

²⁷ See above, chapter 2.1. The ruins of one of the known temples of Amenhotep I lie directly South of our tomb complexes, in a distance of approximately 500 meters (cf. the map in H. Carter, in: *JEA* 3, 1916, pl. XIX).

x+1: → <i>ḏd mdw jn Jmn-R^c nb</i> [<i>nswt t3wj</i>] ///	Utterance by Amun-Ra, Lord of [the Thrones of the Two Lands] ///
x+2: ← <i>n k3 n jrj p^ct ḥ3tj-^c jt-nṯr mry nṯr</i> <i>jmy-r3 [hm.w]</i>	for the ka of the Hereditary Noble, Prince, God's Father, beloved of the god, Overseer of [the priests of]
x+3: ← <i>nṯr.w nb.w šm^cw mḥw</i> <i>ns shr jb m [t3 r]</i>	all gods of the South and the North, „tongue" that makes the heart content in [the]
x+4: ← <i>ḏr=f hm nṯr snwy n J[mn] ///</i> ²⁸	entire [country], Second Priest of Amun ///

Since none of the known monuments of Ramsesnakht seems to indicate an earlier state in his career as a Second Priest of Amun, it can almost be excluded that he is the donor of this stela. Furthermore, the epithet *ns shr jb m [t3 r] ḏr=f* does not occur on any of the other monuments where his titles are mentioned. This particular epithet also points to an earlier date of the stela. It contains a variation of the epithet *r3 shr (m) t3 r ḏr=f*, which is part of titulatures from the 18th and early 19th dynasties, and which is usually found in combination with the title of High Priests (dyn. 18) or military and/or vizier's titles (dyn. 19)²⁹. The version given on our fragment is exceedingly rare and, to my knowledge, is not known after the beginning of the 19th dynasty³⁰.

- A similarly nameless personality, a „royal scribe," is mentioned in the inscriptions of several fragments of two large limestone door jambs which, judging by the rather cursory style in which they are executed, do not belong to one of the other officials mentioned.

The possibility that these objects found their way to the tomb at much later times can almost be excluded: most of the objects could not have been meaningfully used for construction or other purposes at Coptic or later times. This holds true even for the stamped bricks. It is hardly plausible to assume that such bricks were brought to the tomb at later times; the tomb of Paser lies deep down in the plain of Sheikh Abd el-Qurna and is almost 1,500 yards away from our site.

²⁸ There are scarce remains of the next sign which could be *R^c* (Gardiner sign list D21). This sign may either belong to the name of the god (*Jmn-R^c*) or to the name of the Second Priest.

²⁹ See, for example: D. Polz, in: MDAIK 42, 1986, 161-62 and fig. 7; A. Gnirs, *Militär und Gesellschaft. Ein Beitrag zur Sozialgeschichte des Neuen Reiches*, SAGA 17, 1996, 102, nts. 535 and 103.

³⁰ Even the more common version (*r3 shr m t3 r ḏr=f*) disappears during Ramesside times; it occurs two or three times in the TIP and - not surprisingly - in the 26th dynasty; see: K. Jansen-Winkel, *Ägyptische Biographien der 22. und 23. Dynastie*, ÄAT 8, 1985, 337, nos. 2.1.21 and 2.1.22; E. Otto, *Die biographischen Inschriften der Ägyptischen Spätzeit*, PÄ 2, 1954, 157.

On the basis of these artifacts, two interpretations are possible. First, the original builder and/or owner of the tomb complex during the late Second Intermediate Period or the early 18th dynasty was still known throughout the later New Kingdom and the tomb (or its courts) was a place of worship and commemoration of this particular person. Second, the original owner/builder of the tomb was unknown and the place was, in a secondary development, considered an important chapel or sanctuary of a Theban god or goddess. This second interpretation would explain not only the predominant role of the goddess Hathor in the Ramesside decoration and architecture (see below), but also the fact that, until now, the Ramesside inscriptions do not seem to refer to a specific earlier owner of the tomb. Both interpretations, however, raise the question of the motivation behind Ramsesnakht's choice to build in the two courts of the old tomb complex.

2.3 *The Ramesside remodeling and re-use*

During the last three field seasons (1994 to 1996), the work of the DAI-UCLA project concentrated on the excavation of the two large courts of tomb K93.11. By the end of the 1996 season, the southern halves of both courts were excavated down to the bedrock (this situation is depicted on plate 10). This work allows a preliminary reconstruction of the major activities during the second construction phase in the 20th dynasty.

Both courts were paved with sandstone slabs. On the east side of the inner pylon there is a row of four circular depressions in the bedrock. These were the foundation „pits" for column bases. Similar depressions are found along every excavated wall of the inner court: four each on the western side of the pylon and in front of the tomb's facade, and an additional five depressions along the south wall of the court (fig. 1). Running along the base of the pylon, its entranceway and the walls of the inner court, there is an additional set of rectangular depressions cut in the bedrock. These represent the „shelf" on which the sandstone slabs, which formed the foundation layer for the vertical sandstone blocks, were placed. The vertical slabs encased all sides of the pylon and the walls of the entire inner court.

The reconstruction is based on: (1) these depressions in the rock and (2) a number of column bases discovered in the course of the excavation. Two well-preserved sandstone column bases were found *in situ* (see plate 10) and a number of destroyed examples were found close to their original position. (3) On the eastern side of the pylon, six of the sandstone foundation slabs are preserved *in situ*. (4) A deeply incised line and remains of gypsum plaster on the upper side of the slabs indicate the position and thickness of the vertical casing blocks.

Further reconstruction of the Ramesside remodeling is based on material found in the debris above the bedrock. In both courts the layers immediately above bed rock contained an immense amount of fragmented sandstone slabs and blocks. A large number of column and capital fragments found in the inner court show that there were at least two different column types. West of the pylon doorway, fragments of Hathor capitals predominate, whereas the columns in front of the tomb's facade apparently had the more „traditional“, open papyrus capitals.

In addition to those architectural fragments, a vast number of inscribed and/or decorated sandstone fragments was found (approx. 5,500 pieces). Almost all of these belong to the Ramesside decoration of the courts. More than one hundred fragments mention the titles and name of the individual responsible for the remodeling of the two courts: the High Priest of Amun-Rasonther, Ramsesnakht. Through various sources, he is attested over most of the period of the later 20th dynasty (see below, chapter 3).

The sizes of these sandstone fragments vary considerably. Interestingly, among the several thousand sandstone fragments discovered so far, there is less than a handful of intact blocks. However, the decorated fragments do allow some preliminary remarks on its general layout and on topics of the decoration program, especially of its inner court. Apparently, all the walls of this court were topped with a large, decorated *cavetto cornice*, which has regularly spaced individual vertical columns inscribed with the titles and the name of Ramsesnakht, usually in the following form: (↓) *Wsjr hm ntr tpj n Jmn-R^c njswt ntrw R^c-ms-s-nht m^{3c}-hrw*.

Below the *cornice* sits a frieze with alternating depictions of a recumbent Anubis jackal on a shrine and of the head of the goddess Hathor *en face* (plate 11). The depictions are separated from each other by the vertical columns that contain the titles and name of the High Priest. Below this frieze is a still undetermined (but apparently varying) number of registers containing the decoration proper. The topics of the decoration include: scenes in connection with various barque processions (probably including the Valley festival), depictions of foreigners, fragments of an autobiographical inscription in which at least two kings (Ramses IV and Ramses VI) are mentioned, various offering scenes, and spells of the Book of the Dead. Some of the columns were partially decorated with depictions of and hymns to various gods and goddesses³¹.

In addition to appearing frequently in the vertical columns of the *cornice* and frieze, Ramsesnakht's name and titles are also predominantly mentioned in the inscriptions. Plate

³¹ Besides the Theban Triad, there are fragments of hymns addressed to Atum, Ra-Harakhty, Geb, and Neith.

12 shows an example of one of the several occurrences of Ramsesnakht's title sequence:

x+1:	<i>[jrj-p^ct] h3tj-^c hrj-sšt3 [...]</i>	[the Hereditary Noble], Prince, Master of the Secrets, [...]
x+2:	<i>sš njswt jmj-r3 pr wr [n]</i>	Royal Scribe, High Steward [of]
x+3:	<i>hwt njswt hm ntr tpj n Jmn-[R^c]</i>	the Royal Temple, High Priest of Amun [Ra]-
x+4:	<i>[njswt-ntrw] R^c-ms-s-[nht]</i>	[sonther], Ramses-[nakht]

The fragment on plate 13 was part of an architrave or a lintel. It shows two horizontal lines of inscriptions with part of another sequence of Ramsesnakht's titles in surprisingly large, deeply cut hieroglyphs.

On another block, the titles of one of Ramsesnakht's sons (fig. 4 and plate 14) are mentioned:

1:	<i>jt-ntr hrj sšt3</i>	the God's Father, Master of the Secrets
2:	<i>n Jmn-R^c njswt-ntrw sm n</i>	of Amun Rasonther, Sem-Priest of
3:	<i>t3 hwt nt hh.w nw rnpwt</i>	the House of Million Years,
4:	<i>//// m3^c-[hrw] s3 n hm ntr tpj</i>	///, justified, son of the High Priest ...
5:	<i>/-----/</i>	<i>/-----/</i>

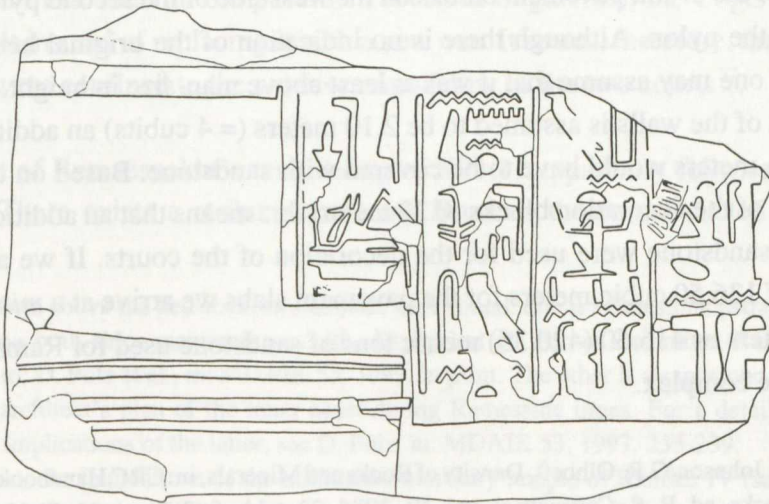


Fig. 4: Sandstone fragment: titles of one of Ramsesnakht's sons (scale 1:4, drawing: U. Rummel)

The name of the son has been scratched out, so that it is by no means clear which of the known sons the inscription refers to. The space in the lacuna would be large enough for each of the sons' names: Usermaatrenakht, Nesamun, Amenhotep, and perhaps even

Meribastet. Based on the known *cursus honorum* of these gentlemen, however, it seems that the titles mentioned in our inscription only match those of Usermaatrenakht, who is known to have held the position of *jmj-r3 pr wr* of the Mortuary Temple of Ramses III (see below, chapter 3).

In addition to the huge amount of decorated sandstone fragments, more than 50,000 kilograms (50 metric tons) of sandstone were found in only *half* of the complex. There is no reason not to expect a similar amount of sandstone fragments in the debris of the northern half of the courts. Thus, these 50 tons of sandstone constitute only a fraction of the original amount used in the construction. The following calculation may illustrate the possible original amount of stone involved in Ramsesnakht's building. Based on an average density range for dry sandstone of $d=2.22 \text{ g/cm}^3$ to $d=2.24 \text{ g/cm}^3$, respectively³², 50 metric tons would equal approximately 22.52 (22.32) cubic meters. This, in turn, would cover 150.18 (148.85) square meters. Assuming, as we do, that both courts were paved under Ramsesnakht, the sandstone found so far would cover a mere 16.50 % (16.35 %) percent of the courts' entire pavement³³.

In addition, the east side of the second pylon, as well as all four walls of the second court, were cased with decorated sandstone blocks. An intact block of the lowest layer was found in the second court. It has a depth of 0.22 m, which is exactly the distance between the incised line of the *in situ* pavement blocks on the west side of the second pylon and the rock-cut part of the pylon. Although there is no indication of the original height of the decorated walls, one may assume that it was at least above man-size in height. Thus, if a minimum height of the walls is assumed to be 2.10 meters (= 4 cubits) an additional area of 232.55 square meters would have to be covered with sandstone. Based on the above-mentioned depth of the decoration blocks (0.22 meter) this means that an additional 51.16 cubic meters of sandstone were used for the decoration of the courts. If we add to this amount a total of 136.50 cubic meters for the pavement slabs we arrive at a *minimum*³⁴ of 187.66 cubic meters or 416.60 (420.35) metric tons of sandstone used for Ramsesnakht's remodeling of the complex.

³² 2.22 g/cm^3 : G.R. Johnson/G.R. Olhoeft, Density of Rocks and Minerals, in: CRC Handbook of Physical Properties of Rocks, ed. R. S. Carmichael, vol. III, 1984, 23, table 5; 2.24 g/cm^3 : Field Geologist's Manual³, compiled by D.A. Berkman, The Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, Monograph 9, 1989, 316, table 2. I am indebted to Craig Manning, Department of Geology, UCLA, for valuable information and comments.

³³ This calculation is based on the actual thickness of 0.15m of several intact pavement blocks and on the overall paved area of 910 square meters for both courts.

³⁴ Not included in this calculation is the substantial additional amount of sandstone used for the 34 columns and architraves in the courts.

To briefly summarize the most important alterations carried out for Ramsesnakht, we have the following: In late Ramesside times, a large rock tomb near the hilltop of Dra' Abu el-Naga was chosen as a shell for a new building. At that time, the complex consisted of two open courts separated by a stone cut pylon, and an inner rock cut tomb with a large actively used subterranean burial system. The courts and the inner chambers of the tomb were only partially decorated or completely undecorated. During the Ramesside construction, the two courts received a sandstone pavement; at the east side of the pylon a portico of columns was added. The inner court was converted into a *peristyle*, or colonnaded court, with a total of twenty-six partially decorated columns³⁵. The eastern face of the pylon and all the walls of the second court were encased with decorated but unpainted sandstone blocks. Without exception, the inscriptions are executed in sunk relief, and the depictions in raised relief. It may be emphasized that – unlike in other architectural enterprises of that time³⁶ – no re-used sandstone blocks were employed for Ramsesnakht's building to any large extent.

It is interesting to note that the extensive remodeling in Ramesside times did not affect the inner rooms of the tomb. The area immediately in front of its entrance contained an unusually large quantity of decorated Ramesside sandstone fragments, whereas the inside part of the tomb contained almost none. In addition, the courts and the inner part of the tomb were re-used in Coptic times when a rather irregular pavement inside the tomb was added. Had there been an old pavement (even in fragments), the Copts certainly would have used it instead of replacing it with a new one. It seems, therefore, that the Ramesside activities were confined to the exterior remodeling of the two courts³⁷.

The layout of Ramsesnakht's remodeling of K93.11 apparently followed an established pattern³⁸. There exists a striking similarity between the reconstructed ground plan of

³⁵ In the debris above the bed-rock, two ostraka were found: one is a limestone ostrakon, inscribed with hieratic on both sides mentioning „... [the Highpriest of] Amun-Rasonther, Ramsesnakht", see A. Piccato, in: D. Polz et al., in: MDAIK 55, 1999, in print. The other is a sandstone ostrakon, inscribed with an architect's plan of the inner court during Ramesside times. For a detailed description and possible implications of the latter, see D. Polz, in: MDAIK 53, 1997, 233-239.

³⁶ In contrast, the foundations of the unfinished mortuary temple of Ramses IV (see below) consisted almost entirely of re-used limestone blocks from earlier temple buildings on the West Bank, see: M. Bietak, SÖAW, 278. Band, 4. Abhandlung, 1972, 24-25. In the forecourt of the contemporary tomb of Ramsesnakht's son-in-law, Amenemope (TT 148, see below), re-used blocks were employed in the foundation of the pylon casing, see: B. Ockinga, in: BACE 4, 1993, 48-49; idem, in: BACE 5, 1994, 61 and pl. 11; idem, in: BACE 7, 1996, 66.

³⁷ The remodeling of an already existing structure may also have included the as yet unexcavated neighboring tomb K93.12, to which we shall return at the end of chapter 3.

³⁸ Cf. the architectural ostrakon found in the second court; above, n. 35.

K93.11 and those of Theban Tombs 32, 35, 158, 282/283, and the early Ramesside tombs of Horemheb and the vizier Neferrenpet in Saqqara (see fig. 5 for a comparison of some of these tombs on the same scale). There remains but one major difference: whereas the architectural layout of the courts of tomb K93.11 and all of the other Ramesside tombs mentioned do follow the same basic architectural layout, the interior rock-cut part of tomb K93.11 does not resemble any known Ramesside conception of tomb architecture. Was the layout of the interior part of the tomb of subordinate importance and, therefore, still an adequate place for Ramsesnakht's burial? Or was the subterranean part of the tomb simply never used by Ramsesnakht at all?

To date, there is no evidence that Ramsesnakht or any other member of his family was ever buried in K93.11. No objects have been found thus far that can clearly be attributed to that family's burial equipment, and neither our excavations nor published materials contain ushabtis or funerary cones with the name of Ramsesnakht.

In addition, recent excavations of Macquarie University in the tomb of Ramsesnakht's son-in-law Amenemope, TT 148, yielded a highly interesting result that may point to the same direction. In the debris of the tomb's interior, ushabtis of a woman named Adjedet-aa (ꜥꜥꜥꜥ-ꜥꜥ, sic!) were found³⁹. In the preliminary report on the first excavation season, the excavator tentatively equates the lady's name with the name of Ramsesnakht's wife which, until recently, was only imperfectly known from a few other sources. Now, during the 1962-69 excavations of the Egyptian Antiquities Organization in what seems to be part of the New Kingdom city of Luxor, the lower part of a seated double statue of Ramsesnakht and his wife was discovered⁴⁰. On this statue, the lady's name occurs twice: once it is ꜥꜥꜥꜥ, the second time it is – spelled slightly irregularly – ꜥꜥꜥꜥ-ꜥꜥꜥꜥ. If these two different spellings of an almost unique name on *one* monument are viewed against the other known sources, then there is no doubt that the first one is the short, and the second one the long version of the same name⁴¹. The name and the person are, therefore, identical with the name and the person on the ushabtis from TT 148. Could ꜥꜥꜥꜥ-ꜥꜥꜥꜥ have been buried in the tomb of her son-in-law⁴²?

At this point, a short excursus is necessary: the Topographical Bibliography of Porter and Moss lists TT 293 as the tomb of (1) the Highpriest of Amun, Ramsesnakht, and (2)

³⁹ B. Ockinga, in: BACE 4, 1993, 46 and n. 9.

⁴⁰ M. Abd er-Raziq, in: ASAE 70, 1984-85, 13-17 and pls. I-II.

⁴¹ Cf.: Ranke, PN II, 272,³⁰. Until recently, the name of Ramsesnakht's wife was thought to be ꜥꜥꜥꜥ-ꜥꜥꜥꜥ (M. Bierbrier, in: LÄ V, 128) which now has to be corrected to ꜥꜥꜥꜥ-ꜥꜥꜥꜥ.

⁴² In the subterranean burial system of TT 148, there are several secondary chambers in which remains of at least five large stone sarcophagi were discovered. (B. Ockinga, in: BACE 4, 1993, 42-45 and personal communication, November 1996). Could some of them have been used for members of the family of the tomb owner's father-in-law?

the Governor of the Town and Vizier, Nebmaatrenakht⁴³. The first part of this entry was sometimes used as an argument and continues to be quoted, even in recent publications⁴⁴. Obviously, it is based on information given in Engelbach's *Supplement of the Topographical Catalogue* which in turn refers to „data" provided by Gunn⁴⁵. On the left side of the facade of K93.11 there was, in fact, a number 293, painted in black ink – but our tomb has nothing in common with the description of tomb TT 293 in Porter and Moss. The mystery about this number was solved by D. Larkin and C. van Siclen III in an article which appeared in 1975⁴⁶. Apparently, the description in Porter and Moss refers to an unnumbered tomb which lies approximately 100 meters west of K93.11, one that shows scant remains of decoration and inscriptions mentioning a scribe Huy. The original numbering of tomb K93.11 and the identification of its owners may be traced back to some inscribed „fragments"⁴⁷ which may have been discovered by Gunn himself but have since disappeared. In all probability, these objects included decorated sandstone fragments like those which were still visible on the surface when we started work in K93.11⁴⁸.

Ramsesnakht's building did not survive for a very long time after its completion. According to the preliminary analysis of the stratigraphy of both courts, the lowest layer (immediately above the bed-rock) is a destruction horizon. Almost all the sandstone fragments found to date came from this layer. The size and nature of the fragments strongly suggest that the destruction was not caused by natural events (earthquakes, erosion, or the like); instead, the building was demolished. Both the relief and the inscriptions on the fragments are exceptionally well preserved; they do not seem to have been exposed to wind and weather for too long. On a few fragments, even hieratic ink inscriptions are well preserved. The excellent condition of the Ramesside decorated fragments places them in strong contrast to the few sandstone fragments with the remains of an offering lists. They were badly weathered and presumably date to a much earlier time (see above, chapter 2.1).

⁴³ PM I,1², 373.

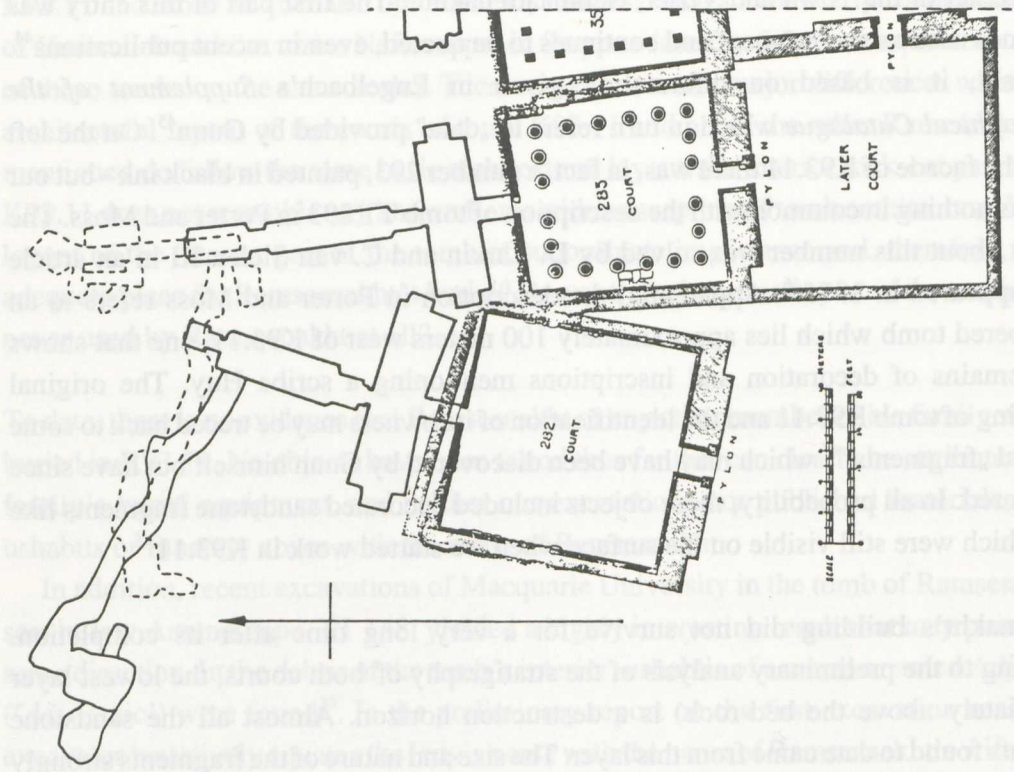
⁴⁴ E.g.: E. Wente, in: JNES 25, 1966, 82; A.J. Peden, *The Reign of Ramesses IV*, 1994, 67.

⁴⁵ R. Engelbach, *A Supplement to the Topographical Catalogue of the Private Tombs of Thebes*, 1924, 22-23; cf.: D. Polz, in: MDAIK 51, 1995, 212, n. 13.

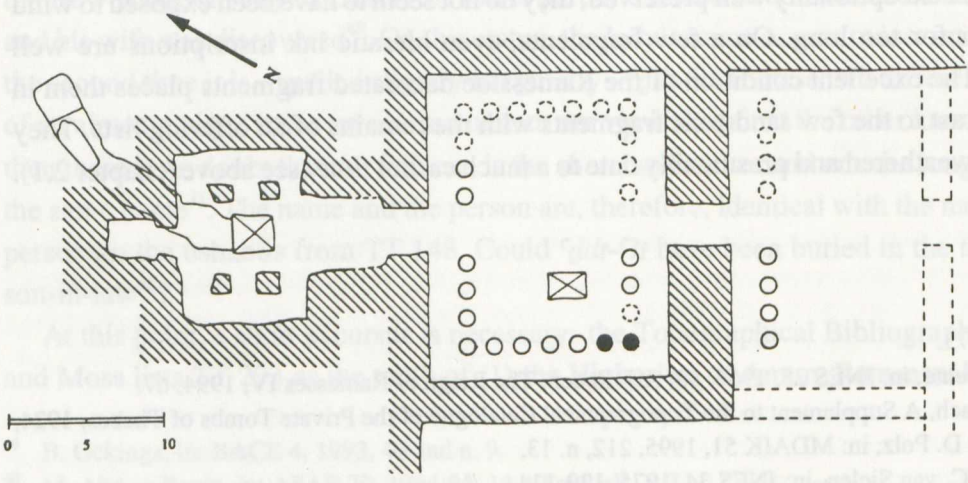
⁴⁶ D. Larkin/C. van Siclen, in: JNES 34, 1975, 129-134.

⁴⁷ „Both names are from fragments found in the tomb", Engelbach, *Supplement 22*, n. 1.

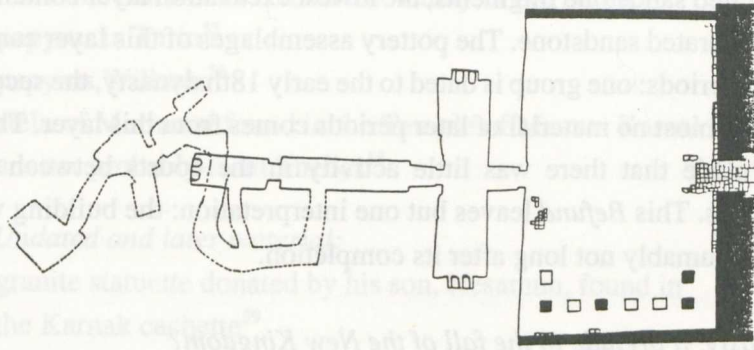
⁴⁸ Of course, little can be made of information based on now-lost fragments, but the implications are clear. If the fragments on which Nebmaatrenakht is mentioned were once part of the decoration of Ramsesnakht's building, it would considerably reduce the possible range of time in which the decoration of Ramsesnakht's building was finished: Nebmaatrenakht's first attested year in office is year 14 of Ramses IX!



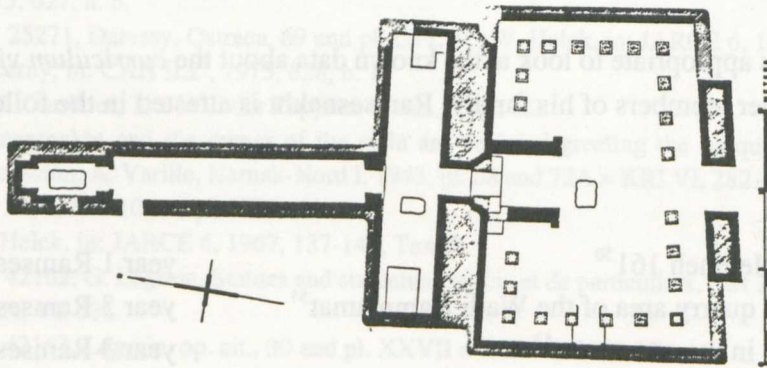
B: TT 282 and 283, after C.S. Fisher, in: The Museum Journal XV, 1924, plan on p. 46



A: K93.11 in Dra' Abu el-Naga



D: TT 35, after L. Bell,
in: Expedition 10,2, 1968, 44



C: TT 158, after K. Seele, The Tomb of
Tjanefer at Thebes, OIP 86, 1959, pl. 41

Fig. 5: Groundplans of selected Ramesside tombs (scale 1:500)

It is unlikely that the building was later used primarily as a quarry. In addition to the thousands of extant decorated sandstone fragments, the lowest excavation layer contained more than 50 tons of undecorated sandstone. The pottery assemblages of this layer can be attributed to two different periods: one group is dated to the early 18th dynasty, the second to the Ramesside period. Almost no material of later periods comes from this layer. Thus, the assumption can be made that there was little activity in the courts between the Ramesside and Coptic times. This *Befund* leaves but one interpretation: the building was deliberately destroyed, presumably not long after its completion.

3 *The Ramsesnakht Dynasty: a prelude to the fall of the New Kingdom?*

Ramsesnakht's building is an unusual monument, both in terms of its architectural layout and its historical implications. It is one of the largest and most ambitious of such constructions in the necropolis (see fig. 5 for a comparison of similar structures). Even more important, it is one of the last known completed monumental structures of the New Kingdom on the Theban West Bank. The fact that Ramsesnakht did not have to excavate the tomb and courts from bed-rock himself was compensated for by the extensive effort expended in the remodeling of the courts. This effort is reflected in the enormous amount of sandstone used for both the pavement and the decorated casing blocks. No other private monument on the West Bank used sandstone to such an extent, except perhaps for the Mortuary Temple of Amenhotep, son of Hapu.

At this point, it seems appropriate to look at the known data about the *curriculum vitae* of Ramsesnakht and other members of his family. Ramsesnakht is attested in the following textual sources:⁴⁹

A. *Dated material:*

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| 1. ostrakon Deir el-Medineh 161 ⁵⁰ | year 1 Ramses IV |
| 2. a. rock stela in the quarry area of the Wadi Hammamat ⁵¹ | year 3 Ramses IV |
| b. rock inscription in the same area ⁵² | year 3 Ramses IV |

⁴⁹ The list is partially compiled from: G. Lefebvre, *Histoire des Grands Prêtres d'Amon de Karnak jusqu'à la XXIIe Dynastie*, 1929; Kees, *Priestertum*, 123-30; W. Helck, in: *JARCE* 6, 1967, 138-39; J. Černý, in: *CAH* II,2³, 1975, 626-34.

⁵⁰ Černý, *oDeM* 1-456, *DFIFAO* II, 4, pl. 37, no. 161, line 3-4 (= *KRI* VI, 114 (A15)). Cf.: J. Černý, in: *CAH* II,2³, 1975, 626, n. 4; W. Helck, in: *JARCE* 6, 1967, 138.

⁵¹ Couyat/Montet, *Inscr. du Ouâdi Hammâmât*, 34-39 (nos. 12), pl. IV = *KRI* VI, 12-14 (10). Cf.: L. Christophe, in: *BIFAO* 48, 1949, 1-38 and pl. 1.

⁵² Couyat/Montet, *op.cit.*, 108 (no. 223), pl. XL = *KRI* VI, 12 (9).

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| 3. papyrus Deir el-Medineh 24 ⁵³ | year 3 Ramses IV |
| 4. ostrakon Cairo 25271, from the Valley of the Kings ⁵⁴ | year 4 Ramses IV(?) |
| 5. papyrus in Turin ⁵⁵ | year 6 Ramses IV(?) |
| 6. papyrus Wilbour ⁵⁶ | year 4 Ramses V |
| 7. stela of Merimaat found in the Temple of Maat at Karnak ⁵⁷ | year 7 Ramses VI |
| 8. a letter probably from Thebes ⁵⁸ | year 2 Ramses IX |

B. Undated and later material:

1. granite statuette donated by his son, Nesamun, found in the Karnak cachette⁵⁹
2. schist/alabaster statuette found in the Karnak cachette⁶⁰
3. architrave or lintel from a house in Hermopolis⁶¹
4. TT 148⁶²
5. two ostraka from the Valley of the Kings in Cairo⁶³ (cf. A-4)
6. the tomb of Setau in El-Kab⁶⁴
7. papyrus in Turin⁶⁵ year 1 of an unknown king

⁵³ S. Allam, *Hieratische Ostraka und Papyri*, 1973, pl. 87 = KRI VI, 134,11. Cf.: J. Černý, in: CAH II,2³, 1975, 627, n. 6.

⁵⁴ CG 25271, Daressy, *Ostraca*, 69 and pl. LVI; cf.: W. Helck, in: JARCE 6, 1967, 138.

⁵⁵ J. Černý, in: CAH II,2³, 1975, 628, n. 1.

⁵⁶ A.H. Gardiner, *The Wilbour Papyrus*, 4 vols., 1941-52.

⁵⁷ Ramsesnakht and the owner of the stela are depicted greeting the barque of Amun, carried in a procession; A. Varille, *Karnak-Nord I*, 1943, pl. 68 and 72A = KRI VI, 282-83; P. Vernus, in: BIFAO 75, 1975, 102-10 and pl. XIII.

⁵⁸ W. Helck, in: JARCE 6, 1967, 137-140, Text B.

⁵⁹ CG 42162, G. Legrain, *Statues and statuettes de rois et de particuliers*, part 2, 1909, 29 and pl. XXVI = KRI VI, 531.

⁶⁰ CG 42163, Legrain, *op. cit.*, 30 and pl. XXVII = KRI VI, 89, 3-10.

⁶¹ A. Hermann, in: MDAIK 7, 1937, 33-34 and pl. 10(b); J. D. Cooney, *Amarna Reliefs from Hermopolis in American Collections*, 1965, 109-10 (no. 64); KRI V, 230, 12-14.

⁶² PM I,1² 259 (4); KRI VI, 91, 15-16; 92, 1-2; 93, 14; G. A. Gaballa/K. Kitchen, in: MDAIK 37, 1981, 170-71 fig. 7. See now: B. Ockinga, in: BACE 4, 1993, 41-50; idem, in: BACE 5, 1994, 61-66; idem, in: BACE 7, 1996, 65-73.

⁶³ CG 25030, Daressy, *Ostraca*, 7 and pl. VII (KRI V, I 89, 12) and CG 25311; Daressy, *Ostraca*, 80. Cf.: J. Černý, in: CAH II,2³, 1975, 627, n. 7.

⁶⁴ Rock tomb no. 4 at el-Kab; PM V, 181 (8)-(9); KRI VI, 557, 3; Ramsesnakht is mentioned as father of Meribastet who was married to a daughter of the tomb owner, the High Priest of Nekhbet in el-Kab, Setau.

⁶⁵ pTurin, pl. CV, 13.

8. a letter probably from Thebes (cf. A-8)⁶⁶ no date, but most probably later than A-8
9. decoration on the eastern outside wall of Court II between the Seventh and Eighth Pylons in Karnak⁶⁷ year 10 Ramses IX
10. autobiographical text of [Amenhotep?] on the outside wall of Thuthmosis' III bark shrine at the Seventh Pylon in Karnak⁶⁸
11. granite statue group found in Hod Abu el-Gud, Luxor⁶⁹
12. three doorjambs of Sethmose from Medinet Habu⁷⁰

These sources are extensively discussed by Černý, Helck, Wenté, Bierbrier, L. Bell⁷¹ and others and need not be fully discussed again. For the purpose of this article it suffices to emphasize some of the more interesting aspects of these documents. From the first to the last mention of Ramsesnakht, the High Priest of Amun appears in situations where one usually does not expect such a personality. His participation in one of the largest quarry expeditions in the New Kingdom⁷² as both High Priest of Amun and Overseer of all works (A-2) is as unprecedented as his involvement in several other duties. Accompanied by the „Chief of the Treasury, Mentemtowy“⁷³, Ramsesnakht was in charge of the distribution of clothes and food to the workmen of the royal tomb (A-3). He was also concerned with the construction work on the royal tomb (A-1) where he apparently delivered a letter to the work gang, and returned after two days „to take the dispatches to the place where the Pharaoh was“. On another occasion (B-7), „he attended with the vizier (i.e. Neferrenpet) and other notables the transport of the king's granite sarcophagus to the tomb“⁷⁴. Ramsesnakht was also in control of the gold-mines „of the Temple of Amunrasonther“ in the eastern desert. His letter (B-8) to the Nubian officers of an expedition to the gold-mines shows that Ramsesnakht was, understandably, extremely concerned about the security of the mining

⁶⁶ W. Helck, in: JARCE 6, 1967, 140-143, Text C.

⁶⁷ PM II², 172 (505) and (506) = LD III, 237 e.

⁶⁸ E. Wenté, in: JNES 25, 1966, 74-83 (figs. 1-3) and pls. VIII-X.

⁶⁹ M. Abd er-Raziq, in: ASAE 70, 1984-85, 13-17 and pls. I-II.

⁷⁰ KRI VI, 89-90.

⁷¹ For Černý and Helck: see note 49; Wenté, op.cit., 73-87; M. Bierbrier, *The Late New Kingdom in Egypt*, 1975, especially 10-13; L. Bell, in: *Serapis* 6, 1980, 7-27.

⁷² L. Christophe, in: BIFAO 48, 1949, 1-38. In this expedition, altogether 8,368 men participated, 900 of whom died during the operation. This latter fact and the sheer amount of people involved seem to indicate that this expedition lasted for a longer time and was carried out for a larger building project in Thebes.

⁷³ After J. Černý, in: CAH II, 2³, 1975, 627.

⁷⁴ Černý, loc.cit.

area and the transport of the gold back to Thebes. It is somewhat unusual to find the High Priest of Amunrasothen responsible for the correct delivery of lead glance to the royal court where it was needed for the production of eye ointment (!) for Pharaoh (A-8)⁷⁵.

Somewhat enigmatic are the inscriptions on a statue of Ramsesnakht and his wife (B-11). This is the only monument where, in addition to his titles of High Priest of Amun and High Steward of the royal temple, the titles *jmj-r3 šnwty n Jmn* (Overseer of the granaries of Amun) and *jmj-r3 pr-ḥd n Jmn* (Overseer of the Treasury of Amun), are mentioned. These titles fit perfectly with the above-mentioned scheme of duties but they are not known from any other sources that list Ramsesnakht's titles⁷⁶. The inscriptions on three doorjambs from Medinet Habu are dedicated to the High Priest Ramsesnakht by an official who may have been one of his direct subordinates in the Treasury of Amun (B-12). The owner of the jambs, Sethmose, is *sš pr-ḥd n pr Jmn* and *sš /// n ḥwt njswt* (Scribe of the Treasury of the Temple of Amun and ///-Scribe of the Royal Temple).

In addition to his position as High Priest of Amunrasothen, it is also very probable that Ramsesnakht, as *jmj-r3 k3wt* (A-2), *jmj-r3 k3wt n mnw nb[w] n Jmn m Jpt-swt* (B-9), var. *n ḥm=f* (B-1), was also responsible for the construction of the royal mortuary temple for Ramses IV on the West Bank⁷⁷. In the inscription of the above-mentioned sandstone block from tomb K93.11, one of his sons is mentioned as a „sem-priest of the house of million years". The name of this temple is not specified, but it seems plausible to assume that this „house of million years" refers to the mortuary temple of the reigning king⁷⁸. As the royal names of Ramses IV and Ramses VI occur on other fragments of the K93.11 decoration, this „house of million years" should refer to the Kings Ramses IV, V, or VI. However, the mortuary temple of Ramses III, Medinet Habu, is the last known finished and fully functional funerary temple on the West Bank. None of Ramses' III successors was able to finish his own „house of million years", although some of these are known from other textual sources. In addition to the above-quoted references, the mortuary temple of Ramses IV is mentioned as a land owning institution in pWilbour during the early years of Ramses

⁷⁵ It is perhaps a noteworthy detail that this letter sent to Ramsesnakht from the royal court (A-8) is a rather harsh „reminder". It quite openly accuses the High Priest of having previously delivered lead glance of inferior quality to the royal court.

⁷⁶ The possibility that this is „another" Ramsesnakht can be excluded on the grounds that on this statue the name of his wife, *ḥdt-ḥt*, occurs in two different versions (see above, chapter 2.3).

⁷⁷ For the general conception of royal mortuary temples on the Theban West Bank, see: R. Stadelmann, in: MDAIK 34, 1978, 171-80; idem, in: MDAIK 35, 1979, 303-21. For the economic aspects of the funerary temples, cf. now B. Haring, in: GM 132, 1993, 39-48.

⁷⁸ As is the case, for example, in pHarris where in the introduction, a „nameless" house of million years is mentioned which certainly refers to the mortuary temple of the fictional author of the text, Ramses III. See: H.D. Schaedel, Die Listen des großen Papyrus Harris, LÄS 6, 1936, 20.

V (A-6); the same is true for the mortuary temple of the last-mentioned king, during whose reign the pWilbour document was written. Interestingly, the person in charge of the land owned by the mortuary temple of Ramses V, which probably existed only on paper, is Ramsesnakht⁷⁹! In the same document he is, needless to say, also mentioned as being in charge of the land owned by the Temple of Amun in Karnak, and he himself seemed to have owned land in Middle Egypt⁸⁰. The Mortuary Temple of Ramses VI is mentioned once in the Karnak inscription (B-10). Thus, although the three mortuary temples of Ramses IV, V, and VI were different administrative institutions, they all seem to have been one and the same building – the unfinished temple of Ramses IV.

The construction of this huge temple complex was started in the eastern plain of the Asasif, probably during the later part of Ramses' IV reign. Work continued under Ramses V and VI and the scale of this temple complex would have surpassed that of Medinet Habu had it ever been completely finished. It seems, however, that the project was abandoned long before its completion and it is therefore doubtful that it was ever fully functional. Two smaller buildings for Ramses IV were perhaps finished; one is further to the east of the planned temple, whereas the other is north of the mortuary temple of Amenhotep, son of Hapu⁸¹. It is unclear whether these smaller temples/chapels served the same function as the „house of million years". Judging by the alterations and additions by later kings, especially Ramses IV and VI, in the text program of the Temple of Medinet Habu⁸², it seems that this temple was also used as a mortuary complex for later Ramesside kings.

Ramses IV's unfinished temple complex was partially excavated by Winlock during the Metropolitan Museum of Art Expedition of 1912-13⁸³. Work continued in 1934-35 under Lansing⁸⁴. That the building was started by and for Ramses IV was amply demonstrated by the discovery of seven intact foundation deposits containing several hundred objects

⁷⁹ pWilbour, §§ 122 and 214.

⁸⁰ pWilbour, §§ 51, 117, 208; cf. op.cit. vol. II, 86.

⁸¹ Although known as „temples" (PM II², 424 and 454), neither of these two buildings deserve this designation. To date, not even the groundplans of the buildings are known. Of the Asasif „temple", only a foundation deposit of Ramses IV and scant remains of a limestone colonnade were preserved when the area was excavated by Lord Carnarvon and Howard Carter in 1911, see: Five Years' Explorations at Thebes, 1912, 48 and pl. XXX. The other „temple" is only vaguely mentioned and the attribution to Ramses IV seems doubtful; see C. Robichon/A. Varille, in: RdE 3, 1938, 99, no. V on plan; cf.: C. Robichon/A. Varille, Le Temple du Scribe royal Amenhotep Fils de Hapou, FIFAO XI, 1936, pl. V; PM II², 459.

⁸² A.J. Peden, The Reign of Ramesses IV, 1994, 41.

⁸³ H.E. Winlock, in: BMMA 9, 1914, 11-23; idem, Excavations at Deir el Bahri 1911-1931, 1942, 9-13.

⁸⁴ A. Lansing, in: BMMA, part II, November 1935, 4-16.

inscribed with the name of this king⁸⁵. During the excavations of the Austrian Mission in the Asasif, the hitherto unexcavated western part of the temple area was exposed by Bietak from 1969-71⁸⁶. These excavations yielded another partially intact foundation deposit which, among other things, included more objects inscribed with Ramses' IV names. Close to this foundation deposit, a number of inscribed jar handles mentioning deliveries of wine to the „house of million years" of Ramses IV were discovered⁸⁷.

Of even greater interest was the discovery of several hieratic ink inscriptions on the rock of the temple's foundation bed. According to Bietak, these inscriptions indicated the progress of work. They include a date, followed by a measurement (in cubits and palms), and the specific place of a certain activity. At the end of each of these „bench marks" (Kitchen) follows the name of the stone-masons' gang. In two instances, the name of the overseer of works, Usermaatrenakht, is also included⁸⁸. Undoubtedly, Usermaatrenakht inherited the office from his father Ramsesnakht.

Usermaatrenakht was probably the oldest son of Ramsesnakht. He appears in various administrative contexts, all of which seem to date much earlier than the first appearances of his brothers Nesamun, Amenhotep, and Meribastet (II)⁸⁹. Subsequent to Usermaatrenakht's appearance as overseer of works, he is found as High Steward of the Temple of Ramses III in Medinet Habu in pWilbour (A-6). Presumably in the same position, he is also mentioned in a partially destroyed inscription in the tomb of his brother-in-law, the Third Priest of Amun, Amenemope (B-4, see below). Here, Usermaatranakht is shown making offerings to his father Ramsesnakht. Amenemope's tomb was most probably decorated during the time of Ramses V⁹⁰.

⁸⁵ Cf.: Hayes, Scepter II, 371-72.

⁸⁶ M. Bietak, Theben-West (Luqsor), Vorbericht über die ersten vier Grabungskampagnen (1969-1971), SÖAW, 278. Band, 4. Abhandlung, 1972, 17-26; see also the exhibition catalogue: Funde aus Ägypten - Österreichische Ausgrabungen seit 1961, Wien 1979, 13-14 and 95-99.

⁸⁷ Bietak, Theben West (Luqsor) 19, pl. IXc (= KRI VI, 49).

⁸⁸ *ḥrtyw nṯr n Wsr-M3ʿt-Rʿ-nḥt*, Bietak, op.cit., 20-24, Abb. 5 and pl. XI (= KRI VI, 49). In view of Usermaatrenakht's involvement in this large scale construction project it is, admittedly, tempting to assume - as does Bietak, op.cit., 24 - that our Usermaatrenakht is also identical with the „priest of the temple of Min, Horus, and Isis in Coptos, Usermaatrenakht", who headed a quarry expedition to the Wadi Hammamat in year 1 of Ramses IV (G. Goyon, Nouvelles inscriptions rupestres du Wadi Hammamat, 1957, No. 89, 103-06 = KRI VI, 1-2).

⁸⁹ None of his monuments, however, are dated absolutely. The first mention of Usermaatrenakht are those hieratic ink inscriptions just mentioned; they are located on the sides of the rock bed that was excavated for the foundations of the temple, thus certainly dating to the initial phase of the construction. With a certain amount of probability, the beginning of this gigantic construction project can be dated to a later part of Ramses IV's reign, see: Peden, op.cit., 48-51. For a different point of view, see: Bierbrier, The Late New Kingdom, 11.

⁹⁰ See below.

It is also likely that the mutilated inscription on a sandstone block found during the excavation of K93.11 refers to him, rather than to one of his brothers (see above, chapter 2.3). The inscription includes the titles „God’s Father, Master of Secrets of Amun-Rasonther, and Sem-Priest of the House of Million Years“.

Obviously, Usermaatrenakht’s most important position was that of High Steward of the Temple of Ramses III, Medinet Habu – a position held by both his father Ramsesnakht and his grandfather Meribastet before him. On a lintel or architrave discovered in a house of the New Kingdom city of Hermopolis, Usermaatrenakht appears in the classical role of a son offering to his father (B-3) which may support an assumption that he was Ramsesnakht’s oldest son. There, only two titles of Usermaatrenakht are given: Royal Scribe and High Steward of the Temple of Ramses III. As High Steward, Usermaatrenakht was in charge of the vast areas of land that was owned by both the Medinet Habu Temple and by the king. In pWilbour, no other private person is in charge of such an immense area of land (A-6). He was „so much the most important person employed by Pharaoh to administer khato-land, that no less than nine pages (of the papyrus), *i.e. well over 250 entries, are devoted to the fields for which he was responsible*“⁹¹.

Ramsesnakht’s first son was joined in positions of power by his brothers, Nesamun and Amenhotep. They too bore titles which confirm their participation in the upper-most administrative echelons of the late 20th dynasty; both men are attested as High Priests of Amun. It is certain that Amenhotep was his father’s successor in the position of High Priest of Amun. Nesamun is only once attested as High Priest of Amun, on the Karnak scribal statue (B-1) which he has dedicated to his father Ramsesnakht. Therefore, it is likely that Nesamun held this position only briefly, either in the period between the last year of Ramsesnakht (year 2 Ramses IX) and the first year in which Amenhotep is attested as High Priest of Amun (year 10 Ramses IX)⁹², or – more likely – at the end of the reign of Ramses XI⁹³. L. Bell has pointed out that there are strong indications that this inscription may have been added later and therefore cannot be used as a criterion for the succession of High Priests. Bell further suggests that the High Priest of Amun, Nesamun, is identical with the Second Priest of Amun, Nesamun, who is attested from year 13 Ramses IX until year 24 Ramses XI. The weak point in Bell’s reconstruction is that he has to assume that several different sources in which the name Nesamun appears all refer to one and the same personality.

⁹¹ pWilbour II, 161.

⁹² J. Černý, in: CAH II,2³, 1975, 628.

⁹³ L. Bell, in: Serapis 6, 1980, 16-27.

On the other hand, in some of these sources several other titles and functions are mentioned in connection with the Nesamuns that seem to be closely linked to the known duties and responsibilities of Ramsesnakht. A Nesamun appears as *sš n Pr-ʿ3, wb3 njswt*, in which position he was twice responsible for distributing extra wages to the workmen of Deir el-Medineh. One Nesamun is known as a member of the committee that investigated the „Great Tomb Robberies" at the end of the reign of Ramses IX. In the Turin necropolis diary, a Nesamun appears as *jmj-r3 pr ḥd*. Most interestingly, he also held the position of *ʿ3 n pr n pr Dw3yt-ntr*, Steward of the Divine Adoratrice⁹⁴. The name of the Adoratrice is not mentioned, but from other evidence⁹⁵ it seems quite probable that she was Isis, the daughter of Ramses VI, the same Divine Adoratrice whose sandstone building is found in the courts of K93.12 (see below). In short, the Nesamuns' various job descriptions would fit well into the scheme of activities of other members of the Ramsesnakht family.

Surprisingly few details are known about the life and career of Ramsesnakht's son Amenhotep. He is first attested as High Priest of Amun in year 10 of Ramses IX, and again in years 16 and 17 of the same king, and perhaps in year 2 of Ramses X⁹⁶. Since Wente's re-publication of the Karnak text (B-10) which includes a mention of an eight months long „suppression" of the High Priest by a private individual, it seems clear that this inscription refers to Amenhotep. According to a statement in pMayer A, Amenhotep was suppressed for a period of nine months⁹⁷. A detailed study of the chronology of this event and the persons involved lies outside the scope of the present paper. Although Amenhotep is not attested later than the second year of Ramses X, there is evidence that the „suppression" took place during the reign of Ramses XI, perhaps shortly before the renaissance era, in which case Amenhotep's tenure would have lasted between 25 and 30 years⁹⁸.

Ramsesnakht's fourth son, Meribastet (II) „inherited" his name from his grandfather, Meribastet (I). Meribastet Jr. was born into a family where his grandfather held the positions of *jmj-r3 ḥmw ntr n ntrw nbw [n] Wnw* (overseer of the priest of all gods of

⁹⁴ E. Graefe, *Untersuchungen zur Verwaltung und Geschichte der Institution der Gottesgemahlin des Amun vom Beginn des Neuen Reiches bis zur Spätzeit I*, ÄGAB 37, 1981, 105 (n30).

⁹⁵ T. Bács, in: GM 148, 1995, 7-11.

⁹⁶ E. Wente, in: JNES 25, 1966, 74-83; M. Bierbrier, *The Late New Kingdom*, 13; L. Bell, in: Serapis 6, 1980, 16-27; J. Černý, in: CAH II,2³, 1975, 629, n. 4.

⁹⁷ pMayer A, 6,3-11; see: A. Niwiński, *Bürgerkrieg, militärischer Staatsstreich und Ausnahmezustand in Ägypten unter Ramses XI. Ein Versuch neuer Interpretation der alten Quellen*, in: I. Gamer-Wallert and W. Helck (eds.), *Gegengabe. Festschrift für Emma Brunner-Traut*, 1992, 243, for a list of earlier treatments of this passage.

⁹⁸ See Wente, *op.cit.*, 82-83; Bell, *op.cit.*, 18.

Hermopolis) and, more importantly, that of the *jmj-r3 pr wr m hwt njswt* var. *n nb t3wy* (High Steward in the royal temple, var. of the Lord of the two Lands), under Ramses III⁹⁹. His son, Ramsesnakht, continued the tradition of the family in the High Steward's office, which is one of the titles found on the sandstone block mentioned above. This office was later inherited by Ramsesnakht's first son, Usermaatrenakht (see above). What we find in the Ramsesnakht family is at least three generations occupying a pivotally powerful position throughout the major part of the 20th dynasty. This ambitious family used its younger son to expand its alliances outside the Theban area:

Meribastet (II) was married to a daughter of the High Priest of Nekhbet of El-Kab, Setau, in whose tomb Meribastet II and his father Ramsesnakht are mentioned (B-6)¹⁰⁰. The decoration of Setau's tomb features a wide circle of relatives – not unlike that found in the tomb of Ramsesnakht's son-in-law, Amenemope (see below). The inscriptions show that Setau headed a similar „dynasty" of relatives all of whom were connected in one way or another to the Temple of Nekhbet of El-Kab. Meribastet II's new father-in-law, Setau, and Huy, his father before him held the position of High Priest. Setau's brother was *jt ntr n Nhbt* and *sš htp ntr*. One of Setau's sons was the Second Priest of Nekhbet. Several sons and daughters held various positions in the administration of the Temple of Nekhbet¹⁰¹. Since the Middle Kingdom, El-Kab controlled the „Edfu-area", i.e. the routes both to the Red Sea (e.g. Wadi Miya) and to certain gold-mines in the eastern desert. At times, officials of the Temple of Amun in Karnak seem to have been active in the region¹⁰², which highlights the need for this institution to extract resources here. An alliance between an influential Theban family and one from El-Kab would be a powerful alliance indeed.

Another such powerful alliance was created, again through „marriage policy". Ramsesnakht's son-in-law and owner of Theban Tomb no. 148¹⁰³, Amenemope, held the position

⁹⁹ LD III, 237 b; Kairo 42162. See also: G. Lefebvre, *Histoire des Grands Prêtres d'Amon de Karnak*, 1929, 179; Kees, *Priestertum*, 123; Helck, *Verwaltung*, 381-82 and 493-94. But see also: Bierbrier, *The Late New Kingdom*, 11 and n. 74.

¹⁰⁰ An inscription in the tomb mentions an event in year 29 of Ramses III, the famous artist's „signature" dates the decoration of the tomb to year 4 of Ramses IX; KRI V, 430, 10-14 and KRI VI, 558, 14, respectively. For the latter, see: W. Spiegelberg, in: *RecTrav* 24, 1902, 185-87.

¹⁰¹ KRI VI, 556-558.

¹⁰² PM VII, 325 lists a rather enigmatic mention of an official of the „Treasury of the Temple of Amun" in one of the gold-mine areas (Barrâmîya); cf.: R. Gundlach, in: *LÄ* II, 742-43. For a general account on the chronology of the gold mines in the eastern desert, see now: R. Klemm/D. Klemm, in: *MDAIK* 50, 1994, 189-222, especially 200-206 for the New Kingdom mines.

¹⁰³ Although the inscriptions of Amenemope's tomb mention events in year 27 of Ramses III, the tomb's decoration was probably finished during the reign of Ramses V, see: G. A. Gaballa/K. Kitchen, in: *MDAIK* 37, 1981, 179. TT 148 is located in the upper third of the Dra' Abu el-Naga hillside, on a slightly lower level than and approximately 150 meters north-east of K93.11. The inside part of it

of the High Priest of Mut and of Third Priest of Amun (B-4)¹⁰⁴. He also came from a priestly background, his father was the Third Priest of Amun, Tjanefer (TT 158)¹⁰⁵. Amenemope was married to Ramsesnakht's daughter Tamerit, and she and her parents appear in Amenemope's tomb, which is also one of the rare places where the name of Ramsesnakht's wife is preserved¹⁰⁶. In one scene, Ramsesnakht and his son, Usermaatrenakht, are depicted, the son offering to the father. The accompanying inscriptions (B-4) explicitly include for Ramsesnakht the title *jmj-r3 pr wr n hwt Wsr-M3^ct-R^c mrj-Jmn m pr Jmn*, High Steward of the Mortuary Temple of Ramses III. A similar (the same?) title appears for Usermaatrenakht though only the last part is preserved (*hwt III III Jmn m pr Jmn*)¹⁰⁷. Among Amenemope's relatives depicted on the walls of his tomb are other high officials of the Theban clerical elite. They appear either in connection with the Amun Temple of Karnak or with mortuary temples on the West Bank. Among those included in Amenemope's tomb decoration are Amenemope's brother, the Fourth Priest of Amun, Amenhotep; another brother, Usermonth, the Sem-Priest in the mortuary temple of Amenhotep III; a third brother, Djehutyhotep, High Priest of Month; a fourth brother, the Overseer of Cattle in the Temple of Ramses III, and others¹⁰⁸.

For over 70 years, from the beginning of Ramses' IV reign until the events only vaguely known as the „war of the High Priest" and the „suppression of Amenhotep"¹⁰⁹, the economic resources of two of Egypt's most important institutions, the Temple of Amun in Karnak and the Mortuary Temple of Ramses III in Medinet Habu, were controlled by the ever-expanding Ramsesnakht family. Indeed, one could describe this situation as a network of multi-level relations which, over three generations, ensured that key positions in the country's economy and administration would be filled by members of the greater Ramsesnakht dynasty (see figs. 6 and 7 for a reconstruction of the genealogy of the Ramsesnakht dynasty¹¹⁰ and an overview of the „network").

shows the „usual" T-shape ground plan with statue groups on all three end walls. Recently, the tomb's decoration was recorded and the sloping passage and the forecourt were excavated by the archaeological mission of Macquarie University under the direction of B. Ockinga (see note 36).

¹⁰⁴ Gaballa/Kitchen, op.cit., 161-180.

¹⁰⁵ K. Seele, *The Tomb of Tjanefer at Thebes*, OIP 86, 1959.

¹⁰⁶ E.g.: Gaballa/Kitchen, op.cit., 166-67, fig. 4, III = KRI IV, 93, 13-14.

¹⁰⁷ Gaballa/Kitchen, op.cit., 171, fig. 7 upper left part.

¹⁰⁸ Gaballa/Kitchen, op.cit., 169, fig. 6; for a recent photograph of part of this scene, see now: B. Ockinga, in: BACE 4, 1993, pl. 11b.

¹⁰⁹ Probably before Herihor's first attested year as High Priest of Amun (year 19 Ramses XI).

¹¹⁰ Compare Bierbrier's slightly different genealogical chart in: LÄ II, 1244-46, chart A.

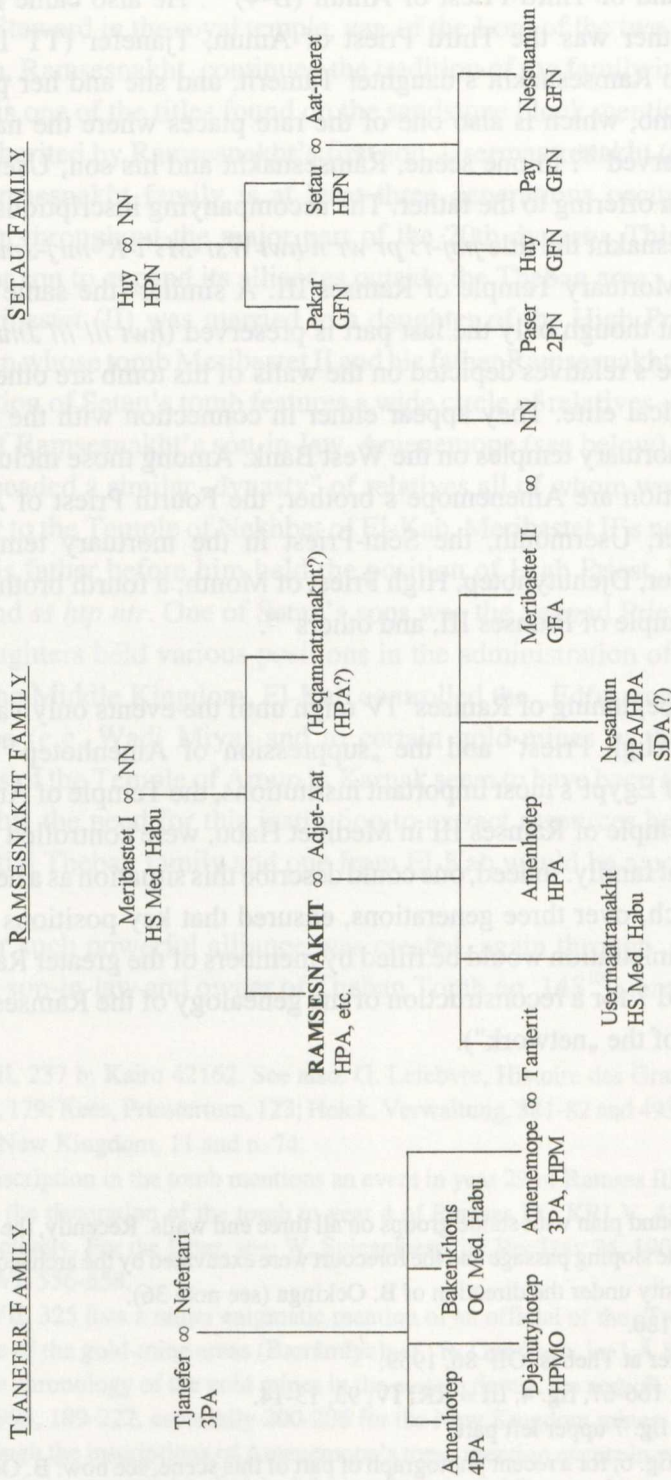


Fig. 6 Reconstructed genealogical table of the Larger Ramsesnakht Family
 HP/2/3/4 = High Priest/Second/Third/Fourth Priest
 A/N/M/MO = Temple of Amun/Nekhbet/Mut/Montu
 (H)S = (High) Steward; DA = Divine Adoratrice;
 OC = Overseer of Cattle; GF = God's Father

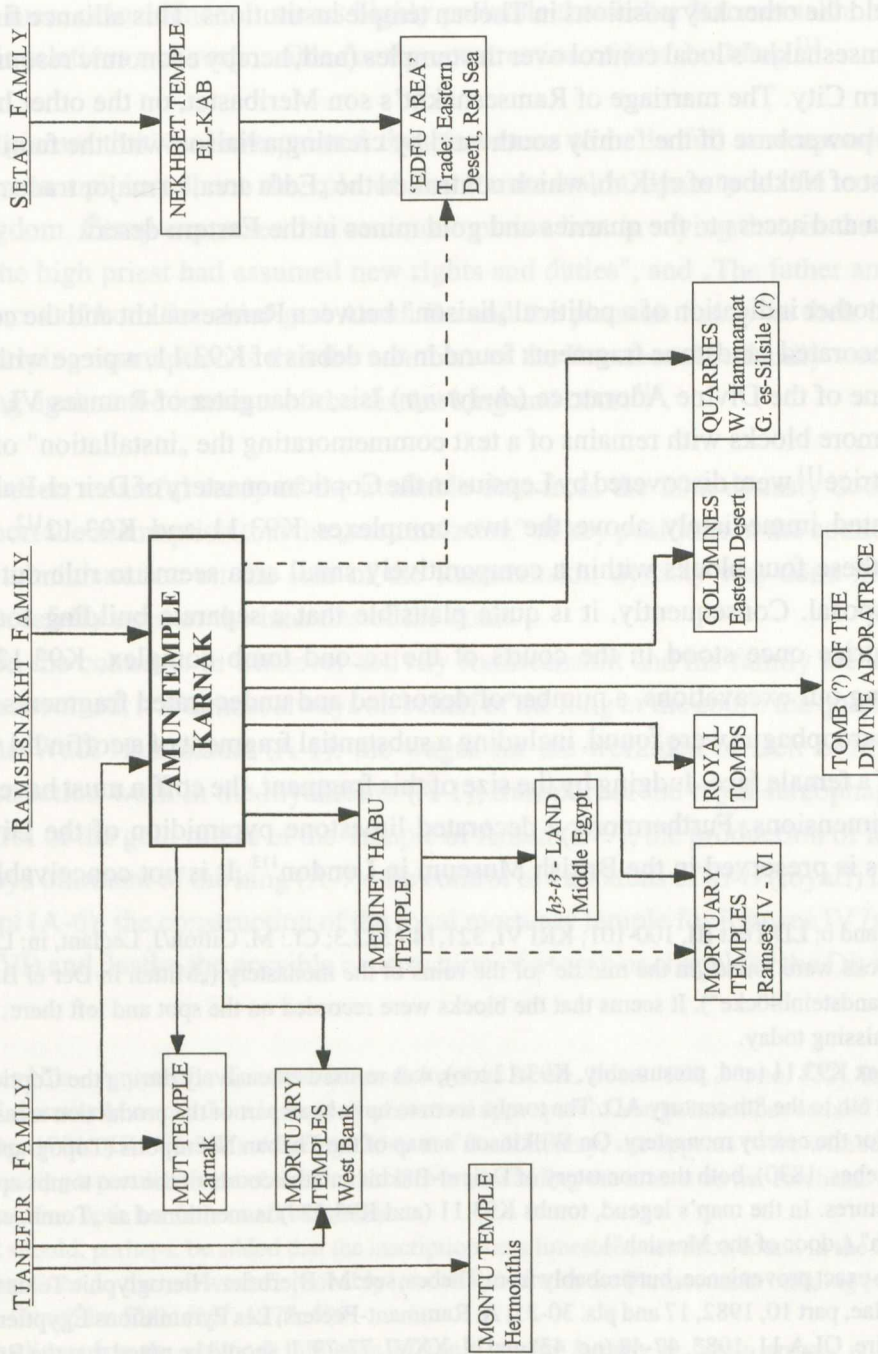


Fig. 7 Overview of the Ramsesnakht 'Network'

Certain branches of this ramified system of relations even seem to have included *Heiratspolitik* as a strategy and instrument of politics. Ramsesnakht's marriage of his daughter Tamerit to Amenemope won the other major Theban family as an ally. It was Amenemope's family that held the other key positions in Theban temple institutions. This alliance firmly cemented Ramsesnakht's local control over the temples (and, hereby economic resources) in the Southern City. The marriage of Ramsesnakht's son Meribastet, on the other hand, expanded the power base of the family southward by creating a liaison with the family of the High Priest of Nekhbet of el-Kab, which controlled the „Edfu area," a major trade route to the Red Sea and access to the quarries and gold mines in the Eastern desert.

There is yet another indication of a political „liaison" between Ramsesnakht and the court. Among the decorated sandstone fragments found in the debris of K93.11, a piece with the cartouche name of the Divine Adoratrice (*dw3yt-ntr*) Isis, a daughter of Ramses VI, was found. Three more blocks with remains of a text commemorating the „installation" of the Divine Adoratrice¹¹¹ were discovered by Lepsius in the Coptic monastery of Deir el-Bakhit, which is located immediately above the two complexes K93.11 and K93.12¹¹². The discovery of these four blocks within a comparatively small area seems to rule out any accidental disposal. Consequently, it is quite plausible that a separate building for the Divine Adoratrice once stood in the courts of the second tomb complex, K93.12. In addition, during our excavations, a number of decorated and undecorated fragments of a large granite sarcophagus were found, including a substantial fragment of a coffin lid with the remains of a female face. Judging by the size of this fragment, the coffin must have had exceptional dimensions. Furthermore, a decorated limestone pyramidion of the Divine Adoratrice Isis is preserved in the British Museum in London¹¹³. It is not conceivable to

¹¹¹ LD III, 218a and b; LD Text III, 100-101; KRI VI, 321,14 - 322,3; Cf.: M. Gitton/J. Leclant, in: LÄ II, 804. The blocks were found „in the middle" of the ruins of the monastery („Mitten in Der el Bachtit liegen drei Sandsteinblöcke"). It seems that the blocks were recorded on the spot and left there; they seem to be missing today.

¹¹² Tomb complex K93.11 (and, presumably, K93.12 too), was re-used extensively during the Coptic Period from the 6th to the 8th century AD. The tombs seem to have been part of the production areas and store rooms for the nearby monastery. On Wilkinson's map of the Theban Necropolis (Topographical Survey of Thebes, 1830), both the monastery of Deir el-Bakhit and the courts of the two tombs appear as huge structures. In the map's legend, tombs K93.11 (and K93.12?) is mentioned as „Tomb, called Bab Meseekh" („door of the Messiah").

¹¹³ BM 1742. No exact provenience, but probably from Thebes, see: M. Bierbrier, Hieroglyphic Texts from Egyptian Stelae, part 10, 1982, 17 and pls. 30-31; A. Rammant-Peeters, Les Pyramidions Égyptiens du Nouvel Empire, OLA 11, 1983, 47-48 (no. 43) and pl. XXVI, 77-79. It should be noted that the British Museum also houses another limestone fragment (BM 481) bearing the cartouche name of Isis (M. Bierbrier, loc. cit.). In the Kofler-Truniger collection there is an interesting alabaster cup with the title and name of the Divine Adoratrice which may well have belonged to her funerary equipment (Geschenk

assume any other context for the pyramidion than the top of a pyramid above the princess' own tomb.

The construction of two buildings at the same place and the same time is certainly more than mere coincidence. It seems highly probable that either Ramsesnakht himself or one of his relatives was responsible for the construction of Isis' building¹¹⁴.

The picture that we have painted thus far seems to be in full correspondence with the common opinion about the role of the Ramsesnakht dynasty at the end of the New Kingdom. Černý expresses this common opinion best in saying that, in the 20th dynasty, „... the high priest had assumed new rights and duties”, and „The father and son had the finances of both the chief god Amun-Re and the pharaoh firmly in their hands”¹¹⁵. The underlying assumption is that the members of the Ramsesnakht family were deliberately acting against the interests of the distant king and court¹¹⁶.

However, a careful study of the available data from the 20th dynasty does not seem to support the assumption that the „accumulation” of key positions in the country's economy and administration on the side of the Ramsesnakht dynasty was done intentionally or purposefully *against* the interests of the court.

On the contrary: in whatever activity Ramsesnakht and his family are shown to have been involved, it is almost always on behalf of the king or the court: the quarry expeditions to the Wadi Hammamat (A-1); the wages for the workmen of Deir el-Medineh (A-3); construction work in the royal tomb (A-1); transport of the royal sarcophagus (B-8); the control of the gold mines of the Temple of Amun (B-9); the production of lead glance for the eye ointment of the king (A-7); the control of vast areas of *ḥ3-t3* (royal!) land in Middle Egypt (A-6); the construction of the royal mortuary temple for Ramses IV (and Ramses V and VI) and, lastly, the possible construction of a tomb or chapel for the Divine Adoratrice

des Nils - Ägyptische Kunstwerke aus Schweizer Besitz, Basel 1978, 53, no. 172). In the Manchester University Museum there is the well-preserved upper part of a large limestone stela of Isis from Koptos (no. 1781, KRI VI, 282). Adoring Osiris and Ra-Harakhty, she appears twice with royal insignia and wearing a peculiar form of the Double Crown, including the uraeus on her forehead. The inscriptions mention both her father and her mother.

¹¹⁴ It should, perhaps, be added that the inscription on a limestone ostrakon found in the debris of K93.11 mentions „... the two works”, probably in connection with the Ramsesnakht building (see above, n. 35).

¹¹⁵ J. Černý, in: CAH II,2³, 1975, 628.

¹¹⁶ In discussing the political influence of the Tjanefer family, K. Seele arrives at an even stricter conclusion: „... Tjanefer contributed as much as any single individual to undermining the pharaonic authority and eventually, in consequence, to the collapse of the Ramessids, from which Egypt never fully recovered”. K. Seele, *The Tomb of Tjanefer at Thebes*, OIP 86, 1959, 10.

Isis: All these activities are hardly „private" enterprises. Rather, they were definitely carried out *on behalf of* and not *against* the interests of the court.

Yet the question remains: how does Ramsesnakht's „new" building in Dra' Abu el-Naga fit into this scheme of building and other activities of the family? If we assume, for the sake of the argument, that K93.11 actually was his tomb, then the existence of the building could be explained. However, the scale of the construction and the immense amount of sandstone used would still need to be discussed. This building was constructed by a private person at a moment when there are no more mayor royal building activities and the country's economy was in a rather weak state.

To attempt an answer to this question, a short look back at the results of the recent excavations in K93.11 is necessary. As mentioned above, the sandstone used for Ramsesnakht's building can be calculated to have reached a minimum of 187.66 cubic meters or approximately 420 metric tons. This amount of stone used by Ramsesnakht can be compared to amounts recorded in inscriptions left by quarrying expeditions. In the second year of king Mentuhotep IV, a huge expedition to the Wadi Hammamat was organized to quarry a single large block for a sarcophagus lid¹¹⁷. Its measurements are given as 4 by 8 by 2 cubits which equal 2.10 by 4.20 by 1.05 meters, i.e. the whole block had a volume of 9.25 cubic meters. According to the inscription, 10,000 men participated in the expedition. An even larger expedition during the reign of Senuseret I consisted of 17,000 men to quarry blocks for 60 sphinxes and 150 statues¹¹⁸. Unfortunately, there is no further information on the size of the blocks. Under Amenemhat III an expedition quarried blocks for 10 statues, each measuring 5 cubits (probably in height). As this is the only measurement given in the text, we have to attempt a reconstruction of the minimum block size: if the 5 cubits refer to the height of a block then we can safely assume that the intention was to produce life-size or slightly larger statues (5 cubits equal 2.62 meters). This means that we have to expect a depth and width for each block of at least 2 cubits each (1.05 meters) which amounts to a volume of 2.88 cubic meters per block or approximately 29 cubic meters for the whole set. The number of participants is said to have been 2,000.

Clearly, the overall situation in the quarries of the Wadi Hammamat is entirely different from that in the Gebel es-Silsila region where the Ramsesnakht sandstone most probably was quarried. The huge work force required for expeditions to the Wadi Hammamat was, first of all, necessary because the quarried blocks had to be transported from the middle of

¹¹⁷ For the following lines and further references, see: K.-J. Seyfried, *Beiträge zu den Expeditionen des Mittleren Reiches in die Ostwüste*, HÄB 15, 1981, 243-85 (expeditions nos. 2, 6, and 11).

¹¹⁸ Or, according to another inscription which is probably referring to the same event, only 80 statues.

the Eastern desert to the Nile. In contrast, the Gebel es-Silsila quarries are located on the banks of the river and we certainly should expect a smaller number of participants there.

However, a direct comparison of the volumes of quarried stone taken by the recorded large royal expeditions with the minimum amount of sandstone needed for Ramsesnakht's building (9.25 : 29 : 188 cubic meters) leaves no doubt that Ramsesnakht required far too large an amount to rely on mere left-overs of other construction projects in the necropolis. The quarrying of this amount of stone certainly required the same man-power, organization, and logistics as any major quarry expedition to Gebel es-Silsila.

Therefore, we must assume that he mounted such an expedition himself and that there was at least one more major, hitherto unknown, quarry expedition to the Gebel el-Silsila quarries during the later part of the 20th dynasty. During that unknown expedition, sandstone was quarried for Ramsesnakht's building and possibly also for the yet unexcavated building of the Divine Adoratrice Isis. To date, no such expedition seems to have been recorded in the numerous inscriptions and graffiti in the Gebel es-Silsila region. However, there are indirect hints to activities in the quarries at that time. In Gebel es-Silsila/West, close to the quarry area proper, there is a huge rock-cut stela of Ramses V¹¹⁹. From a merely chronological point of view, it is possible that this royal stela was carved on the occasion of this expedition which would put Ramsesnakht's quarry expedition under royal authority.

4 Conclusion

The preceding pages have shown that Ramsesnakht's „new" building in the Dra' Abu el-Naga hillside was one of the largest building projects in the Theban Necropolis at the end of the New Kingdom. At that time, the other royal building projects, including the mortuary temple(s) on the West Bank, had already been abandoned. Thus, there remains the question of the purpose of Ramsesnakht's building. At present, there are two possible interpretations: First, the building was indeed the tomb of Ramsesnakht, and his actual burial place still lies hidden in the as yet unexcavated part of the courts. In this case we would have to assume that the architecture of the tomb proper was not considered a crucial factor in the decision to take over an already existing tomb. Second, Ramsesnakht was not buried in K93.11 but in another tomb at Thebes or elsewhere. In this case, the building would have had the function of a „private" mortuary temple for Ramsesnakht, perhaps an unusual but not at all unprecedented phenomenon¹²⁰.

¹¹⁹ PM V, 213; KRI VI, 224-25.

¹²⁰ Compare, for example, the so-called Temple of (the High Priest of Amun) Nebwennenef in the Theban Necropolis (PM II², 421) or the „Chapel of Thoth" built by the Viceroy of Kush, Setau, in El-Kab (PM

In any case, the size, architecture and decoration of the Ramsesnakht building certainly mirrors the political and economic standing of its builder. It was also shown that the wide spread activities of Ramsesnakht and his family were not directed against the interests of the court. Moreover, Ramsesnakht was probably also in charge of the building for the Divine Adoratrice of Amun, Isis, who was the „official" Theban deputy of the king. Therefore, it is hardly plausible to assume that Isis' building in the tomb complex K93.12 was an „official" building, but the adjacent Ramsesnakht building was not.

Undoubtedly, Ramsesnakht and his relatives were the most powerful individuals in Egypt at the end of the 20th dynasty. In this respect, they certainly paved the ground for the succeeding Herihor dynasty and they also laid the foundations for the *Theocracy of Amun* of the Third Intermediate Period – indeed, the assumed relation between Ramsesnakht and the Divine Adoratrice Isis anticipates the institutionalized rule of the High Priest of Amun and the Divine Adoratrice from the 21st dynasty on.

What, then, was the nature of the relation between the Ramsesnakht dynasty and their successors? If we picture the situation at the end of the 20th dynasty on the basis of the above, it becomes clear that over a period of three generations the Ramsesnakht dynasty was able to create a *second center of power* in Upper Egypt, apparently on behalf of the court¹²¹.

Perhaps the court had long planned to govern the country from two „capitals", the political Delta Residence of the court and the Upper Egyptian religious center¹²². Such a political manoeuvre would foreshadow the increasing decentralization of Egypt during the following dynasties. This increasing decentralization apparently contributed to the deterioration of the political and economic situation of the country during the reigns of the last Ramesside kings¹²³, of which the „Great Tomb-Robberies" under Ramses XI are only the most visible signs¹²⁴. During Amenhotep's tenure as High Priest of Amun, the threat became worse and

V, 187-88; KRI III, 84-85). These temples were built by private individuals, but almost certainly on behalf of King Ramses II.

¹²¹ The following short overview of the political situation at the end of the 20th dynasty is compiled from the recent works of K. Jansen-Winkel, in: ZÄS 119, 1992, 22-31; Niwiński, Bürgerkrieg, 1992, 235-62; and A. Gnirs, Militär und Gesellschaft. Ein Beitrag zur Sozialgeschichte des Neuen Reiches, SAGA 17, 1996.

¹²² This would also explain the exorbitant donations of land and people to mostly Theban temples by Ramses III; see: H.D. Schaedel, Die Listen des großen Papyrus Harris, LÄS 6, 1936, 20.

¹²³ See: Gnirs, op.cit., 193-95.

¹²⁴ Obviously, another source of threat and unrest at the same time was the increasing appearance of marauding Libyan tribes, see now B. Haring, in: Sesto Congresso Internazionale di Egittologia, Atti, vol. II, 1993, 159-65 (I owe this reference to Andrea Gnirs).

the viceroy of Kush, Panehsi, was ordered by the king to restore order in the Theban Nome¹²⁵. For unknown reasons, Panehsi and his Nubian force during their military presence in Thebes turned against the High Priest and the king in an action that may have been an attempted *coup d'état*¹²⁶. During this military action, Panehsi suppressed the High Priest for a period of eight or nine months, and used Thebes as a military base from where he launched military campaigns against Middle and Northern Egypt¹²⁷, perhaps aiming at the Delta Residence of the court¹²⁸. The king's reaction to the threat was to order a campaign against the renegade in Upper Egypt. The retaliatory attack was commanded by the army general Piankh, who probably came from one of the Middle Egyptian Libyan settlements¹²⁹. After the successful expulsion of Panehsi and his troops back to Nubia, another general, Herihor, was appointed High Priest of Amun. With this appointment, the Ramsesnakht dynasty came to an end and a new dynasty of High Priests of Amun with a military background took over power and founded the *Theocracy of Amun* in Thebes.

This short overview also illustrates the two major differences between the Ramsesnakht dynasty and its successors. First, in contrast to their successors, members of the Ramsesnakht family never assumed royal privileges or names. Second, none of the known relatives of Ramsesnakht had any connection to the „Third Power“, the military, on which the power and influence of the Herihor dynasty was ultimately based¹³⁰. Herihor and his successors utilized the political and economic structures, organization, and institutions, so successfully created by the members of the Ramsesnakht dynasty, to turn the *second center of power* in Upper Egypt into a state within a state.

¹²⁵ NB: in the Turin Taxation Papyrus (dated to the 12th year of Ramses XI), Panehsi also bears the titles „overseer of the granaries“ and „general“ which underline his task to reinstall order in the area, see Jansen-Winkeln, *op.cit.*, 26.

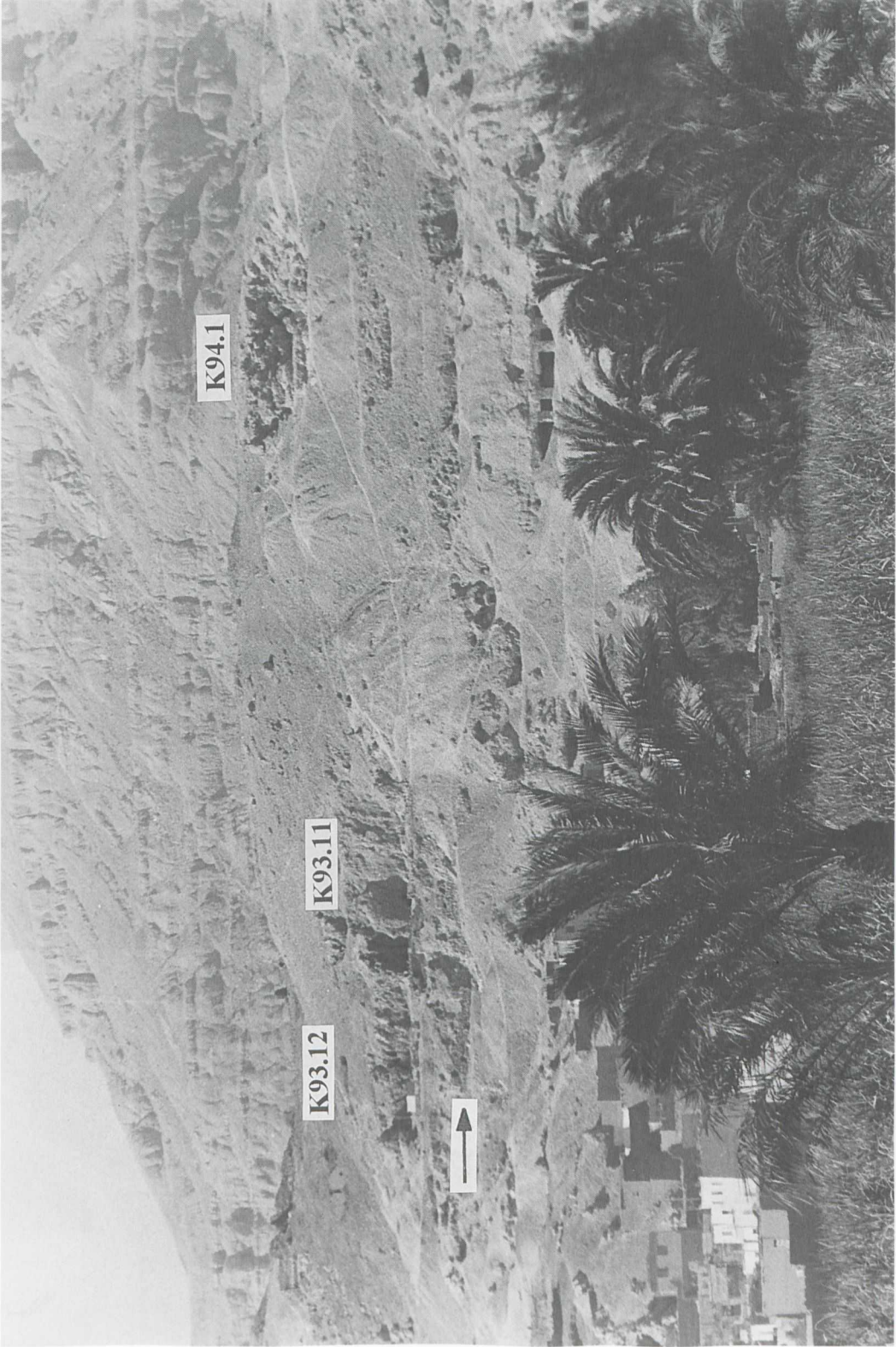
¹²⁶ These troops were almost certainly involved in tomb robberies and plundering of temples, see: Niwiński, *op.cit.*, 259-62; Gnirs, *op.cit.*

¹²⁷ During these military campaigns, at least one major town in northern Egypt, Hardai, was destroyed by Panehsi's troops.

¹²⁸ Jansen-Winkeln, *op.cit.*, 30-31.

¹²⁹ Gnirs, *op.cit.*, 208-211.

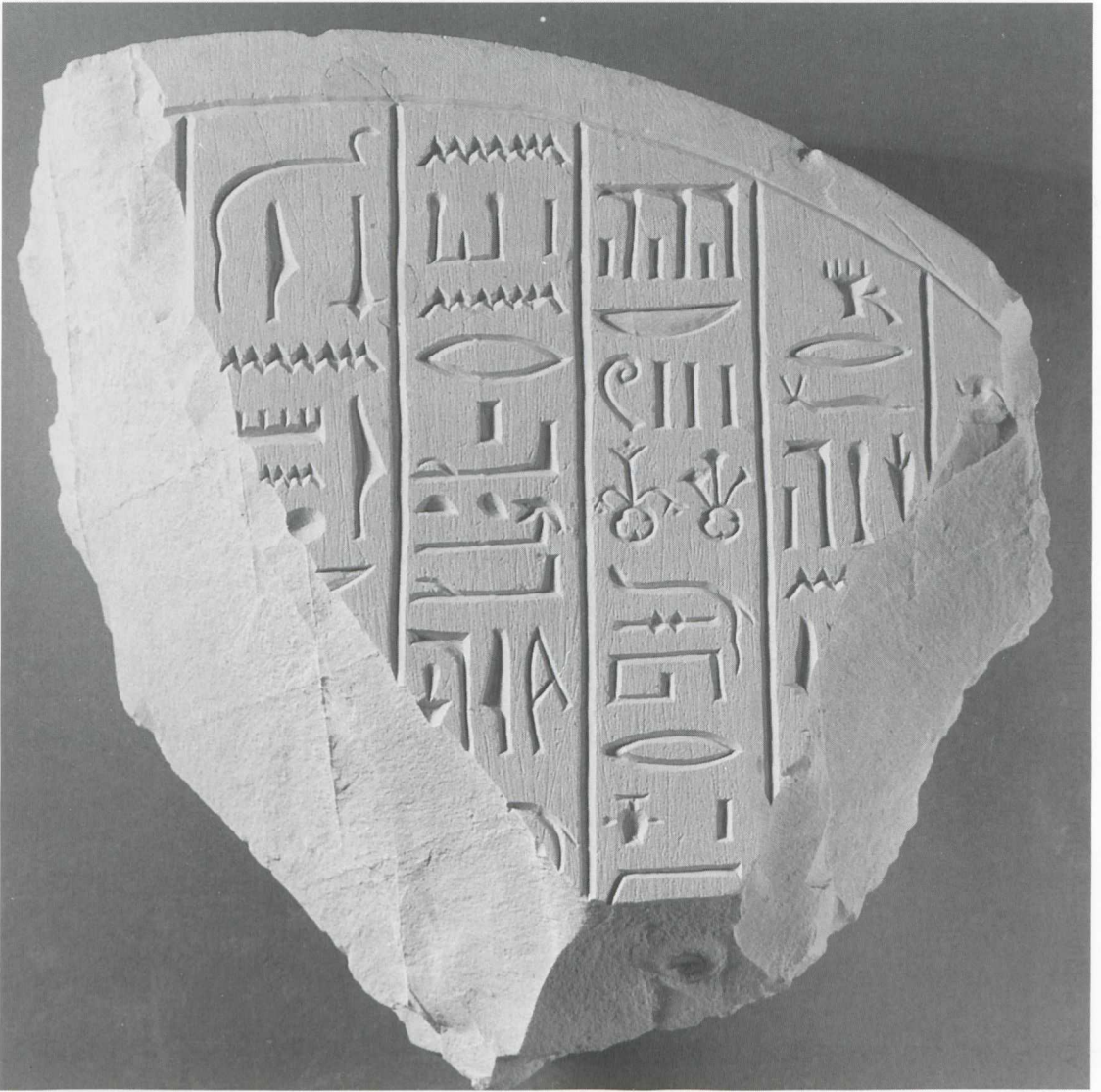
¹³⁰ Gnirs, *op.cit.*, 201-208; *idem*, War and Society in Ancient Egypt, in: K.A. Raaflaub/N. Rosenstein (eds.), War, Armies, and Societies: Perspectives on the Past, 1998, in print.



Dra' Abu el-Naga - overview of the hillside (looking west)



Sandstone fragment with remains of an offering list



Upper part of a limestone stela of a Second Priest of Amun

K911) - overview, the southern half of the inner and outer courts



K93.11 – overview: the southern half of the inner and outer courts



Sandstone fragment of the frieze, showing Hathor *en face*

Fragment of a sandstone frieze, or panel with two faces
of Ramses III, with hieroglyphs and lotus flowers



Sandstone fragment with titles and name of Ramsesnakht



Fragment of a sandstone architrave or lintel with two lines
of Ramsesnakht's titles in deeply cut hieroglyphs



Sandstone fragment with the titles of one of Ramsesnakht's sons

of Ramsesnakht's titles in deeply cut hieroglyphs