A COREGENCY BETWEEN AMENHOTEP III AND AKHENATEN?
THE PROBLEM OF HISTORY IN ANCIENT EGYPT

-ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO AKHENATEN!
COREGENCY? SO WHAT?
EVIDENCE FOR A COREGENCY

• Arguments inconclusive
  - Graffito from pyramid temple of Meidum:
    ‘year 30 under the majesty of the dual king Nebmaatre, the son of Amun, satisfied with Truth, Amenhotep ruler of Thebes, lord of might, ruler of happiness, who loves him who hates falsehood, causing the male to sit down upon the seat of his father, establishing his inheritance in the land’
  - Names of Amenhotep III at Amarna
THE PHENOMENON OF COREGENCY

- **DOUBLE DATING**
  - Middle Kingdom: only on private monuments. Single dates continue.
  - New Kingdom: does not occur except with Hatshepsut and Thutmose III.

- **ICONOGRAPHY**
  - No discernible pattern:
    - Thutmose III and Amenhotep II = equal
    - Hatshepsut, senior = dominant over Thutmose III
    - Amenhotep III, junior = dominant over Thutmose IV

‘[proponents of the coregency theory] must explain why it is that two separate and distinct dating systems are never co-ordinated in inscriptions’ - Redford, *History and Chronology of the Eighteenth Dynasty of Egypt: Seven Studies*, p. 149
So how are Amenhotep III and Akhenaten depicted?

Two kings acting together.
...STILL TOMB OF HUYA

LINTEL—AMENHETEP III, AKHENATEN, AND THEIR FAMILIES.
TOMB OF KHERUEF

AMENHOTEP IV (figures offscale) OFFERING TO RE-HARAKHITI (A)
AND TO AMENHOTEP III AND QUEEN TIYE (B)
PASAGE TO COURT, SOUTH SIDE, UPPER SECTION
(Key to reliefs shown on plates 12-15)
THE EVOLVING ARTISTIC STYLE OF AMENHOTEP III

Fig. 3.17. Detail of Amenhotep III lintel found reused within his own Third Pylon, Karnak. First decade. Karnak Open-Air Museum.

Fig. 3.20. Detail of Amenhotep III Atum face from the back sanctuary of Luxor temple proper; north wall, south face, first register of east side. Second decade.

Fig. 3.29. Detail of Amenhotep III face from the limestone battle stela from his mortuary temple, found in the mortuary temple of Merenptah; upper register. Fourth decade. Cairo, Egyptian Museum no. CG 34026.
STYLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF AMENHOTEP IV/AKHENATEN

Fig. 3.36. Detail of Amenhotep IV face from the Ra-Horakhty temple, Karnak. Berlin block no. 2072.

Fig. 3.37. Detail of Amenhotep IV face from the Ra-Horakhty temple, Karnak; Karnak Tenth Pylon court
COMPARATIVE STYLE CHART

AMENHOTEP III
- Year 28- coregency begins
  - Pre-deification style
- Year 30- 1st jubilee: post-deification style
- Year 37- 3rd jubilee
- Year 38- death

AKHENATEN
- Year 28- coregency begins
  - Pre-deification style
  
Year 37- High Amarna style well established
AMENHOTEP III, IN JUBILEE ATTIRE AND SEATED ON THRONE, ACCOMPANIED BY HATHOR AND QEN
WEST PORTICO, SOUTH OF EMBASSY, AMENHOTEP III
(See plate 8)

AMENHOTEP III, WITH QUEEN TITY, RECEIVING GIFTS ON THE OCCASION OF HIS THIRD JUBILEE
WEST PORTICO, NORTH OF EMBASSY, AMENHOTEP III
(First of two overlapping sections; see plate 12)
CONCLUSIONS

• Very difficult to come to a conclusion
• Evidence seems slightly to favour no coregency
• Very unusual degree of association between Amenhotep III and Akhenaten
• More generally, coregency does not seem to have been a fully defined and codified institution in the New Kingdom
Murnane no. 26

Discovered in 1989, this battered tomb reveals a vizier with a Semitic name who also claimed the title of First Servant of Aten, which is known only from the reign of Amenhotep IV/ Akhenaten. Objects buried with Aper-El date to the time of Amenhotep III, but a number of jar sealings from the tomb are in the name of ‘Neferkheprure beloved of (Osiris) Wennefer (Amenhotep IV)’. Dated docketts written on wine jars from the tomb indicate that Aper-El’s son, the ‘commander of the horse, commander of chariotry, scribe of recruits of the Lord of the Two Lands, Huy’, was buried no earlier than the tenth regnal year of a king who is likely to be Akhenaten.