

traces of the last Ramesside king disappear about twenty-seven years after the death of Ramesses III. The high priest's supreme position was confirmed by an oracle at the temple of Khonsu, which was followed by an approval of Amun.

This event is recorded in an inscription written in the thickness of the doorway that leads from the inner hall of the roofed temple to the outer forecourt, the final addition to the temple of Khonsu. On the architrave of the forecourt, the name of the high priest stands alone enclosed in a royal cartouche. As was the case with Medinet Habu across the river, a building of Ramesses III served as a witness for the most significant political changes in Thebes long after his death.

OTHER BUILDINGS AND RELIEFS

Ramesses III added eight reliefs, which represent him offering to the gods, to the north facade of the eighth pylon at Karnak, built by Hatshepsut and Thutmose III. He also dedicated three reliefs in the rock-cut chapels at Deir el-Medina to the goddess Meret Seger of the Western Mountain, "she who loves silence." Chapels B and C each contain one stele; the lintel of the door to chapel D has an additional relief.⁸⁵

Outside of the Theban area, there is little evidence of the king's building activity. The base of a pylon of a small temple still remains at Edfu. Although Papyrus Harris I mentions temples in the Delta, we can find only scant traces of them. Petrie found two statues with the cartouches of Ramesses III near the "Hyksos monuments" at Tanis.⁸⁶ He also found remains of a fortification, similar in plan to the fortified gate at Medinet Habu and possibly dating to Ramesses III, at Tell el-Yahudeya.⁸⁷

STATUES

The sculpture of Ramesses III follows several traditions of the New Kingdom. From a stylistic point of view, it displays outstanding diversity and reflects the eclecticism of the age. While the extensively usurped statues of Amenhotep III inevitably recall the Eighteenth Dynasty, the favorite model for the original sculpture is the late work of Ramesses II. The colossal statues of this king—with broad faces, high crowns, and massive legs that create the impression of physical mass and strength—are imitated on every scale. Such is the almost life-size standard-bearing statue in Philadelphia (no. 5 below), stylistically the most notable piece among the inscribed sculpture. The

Osiride colossi at Medinet Habu have the king's name written in the form of a rebus, just like on the sculpture of the deified Ramesses II.⁸⁸

The motif of the large scarab carved in high relief on top of the king's head on the cult statue from Almaza (no. 8) is found on four other royal statues, all of them Ramesside.⁸⁹ It may be related to a cult of the deified king practiced in the Ramesside period. The magical inscriptions on this statue are similar to those on the Wilbour Papyrus.⁹⁰ The formula intended to protect against scorpion bites is also found on Horus Zippus stelae of the Late Period. This statue may be a forerunner of the healing statues of the Late Period.

The sculpture of Ramesses III is the last to employ the technique of inlaid eyes in the New Kingdom (no. 6). Based on this stylistic detail as well as on the similarity of the facial features, I have attributed an unidentified head from Abydos (no. 14) to Ramesses III. The attribution of the other four sculptures without inscription (nos. 13, 15, 16 and 17) is based both on provenance and on stylistic similarities to the inscribed sculpture.

Inscribed Sculpture

1. Statue group with Horus and Seth. Cairo, Egyptian Museum, CG 629
Red granite, height: 1.69 m
From Medinet Habu

Only the fragments seen on Borchardt's pl. 116 are ancient. The feet, part of the base, and the upper part of the face have been restored. This is the only example of a coronation scene represented in the round.

Bibliography: Bissing (1914) no. 55, n. 1; Maspéro (1915) 78; Borchardt (1936) 176–77, pl. 116; Roeder (1960) pl. 5; Hornemann (1966) pl. 1365; Porter and Moss (1972) 526; *KRI* V.296; Aldred (1979a) 195; van Dam (1988) 34.

2. Standard-bearing statue, Cairo, Egyptian Museum, CG 42150
Gray granite, height: 1.40 m
Found in the Karnak Cachette in 1904

According to the inscriptions on the standard, the statue was dedicated in the temple of Karnak on the occasion of the annual festival of Amun. It may have stood in the north temple of Ramesses III.

Bibliography: Legrain (1906) 14–15; Maspéro (1915) 182, 183 (no. 674); Jequier (1933) 15, fig. 21; Leibovitch (1938) 39, fig. 27; Hornemann (1951), no. 199; Müller (1961) pl. 156; Porter and Moss (1972) 142; *KRI* V.287; Chadefaud (1982) 69; Saleh (1987) 225.

3. Bust, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 29.733

Red granite, height: 0.46 m

Provenance not known

Bibliography: None

4. Head, Strasbourg, Collection Universite de Strasbourg, 986

Brown quartzite, height: 0.15 m

Bought in Luxor in 1898, said to be from Karnak

Bibliography: Spiegelberg (1909) 12–13, fig. 5 on pl. IX; Buecher and Leclant (1956) 106; Porter and Moss (1972) 292.

5. Standard-bearing statue, Philadelphia, University Museum, E 15727

Yellow-brown limestone, height: 1.25 m

Provenance not known

The lion-headed standard is that of the goddess Mut, and the inscription on the standard refers to the king as “Great of Heb Seds.” This statue may have been dedicated in the south temple of Ramesses III in the precinct of Mut on the occasion of the king’s Heb Sed Festival, celebrated in year 29.

Bibliography: Ranke (1950) 54, fig. 31; Vandier (1958) 400, 406, 408–9, 411, 420–21, pl. CXXX (6); Monnet (1965) 231; Chadeffaud (1982) 67–68.

6. Striding statue, Cairo, Egyptian Museum, CG 1104

Red granite, height: 1.30 m

Provenance not known

This is the last inscribed statue to employ the technique of inlaid eyes in the New Kingdom.

Bibliography: Borchardt (1936) 58, pl. 162; Vandier (1958) 401, n. 3.

7. Seated statue, Jerusalem, Rockefeller Archaeological Museum, PAM 2

Gray basalt, height: 1.48 m

From Beth Shahn, found outside the north temple of Ramesses III

The statue was found in fragments during the excavation of the University of Pennsylvania and restored to its present state.

Bibliography: Rowe (1930) 51; Rowe (1940) 29, pl. iii; Porter and Moss (1951) 379; KRI V.251.

8. Seated group, Cairo, Egyptian Museum, JE 69771

Red quartzite, height: 1.55 m

From Almaza near Heliopolis

The small chapel where the statue was found seems to have been a shrine on the caravan route leading to Canaan. The group is inscribed on the base with ten magical formulae intended to offer protection against snake and scorpion bites as well as other perils of the desert journey. The king has a figure of a scarab on top of the head, explained in the seventh magical formula, where he is identified with Khepri. This statue was deliberately destroyed in antiquity.

Bibliography: Drioton (1939) 57–89; KRI V.261–68; Bianchi (1988) no. 99.

9. Standard-bearing colossus, Cairo, Egyptian Museum, CG 42149

Pink granite, height: 3.80 m; crown (since removed): 0.98 m

From the Karnak Cachette

The inscriptions on the standard call Ramesses “Great of Heb Seds like his father Amun.” This statue seems to have been dedicated in the temple of Amun on the occasion of the king’s Heb Sed in year 29. It is modeled on similar colossi of Ramesses II, such as Cairo CG 42754, 42755, and 42668, all eventually stored in the Karnak Cachette. The colossal size of the statue suggests that it stood in an open court, possibly in front of the eighth pylon, to which the king made some additions.

Bibliography: Daressy (1902) 10 (no.7); Legrain (1906) 14, pl. XII; Vandier (1958) 401, pl. CXXXI (1); Barguet (1962) 272, n. 1 on p. 279; Vandier (1963) 156, n. 16; Porter and Moss (1972) 142; Chadeffaud (1982) 65.

Usurped Sculpture

10. Colossal head, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 75.10

Red granite, height: 0.62 m

From the eastern colossus, south temple, precinct of Mut

This head is in the style of the late Eighteenth Dynasty. It was probably usurped from Amenhotep III.

Bibliography: Nelson et al. (1936) pls. 79, 124; Vandier (1958) 402, 615, pl. CXXX (2); Černý (1958b) 31; Porter and Moss (1972) 273.

11. Head from a group, Cairo, Egyptian Museum, JE 54477

Pink granite, height: 0.70 m

From Medinet Habu, third hypostyle hall

It has been noted that the inscriptions on the back slab of the lower part of the statue, in the third hypostyle hall at Medinet Habu, have been erased and

reinscribed for Ramesses III.⁹¹ The head in Cairo has the facial features of Amenhotep III, somewhat reworked around the eyes.

Bibliography: *Medinet Habu* VII (1964) pls. 483, 484, preface; Hornemann (1957) pl. 368; Porter and Moss (1972) 512.

12. Sarcophagus lid, Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, E. 1.1823

Red granite, Length: 2.99 m

From the tomb of Ramesses III, no. 11, Valley of the Kings

Judging by the inscriptions on the box (Louvre D1) as well as by the iconography and style of the sculpture on the lid, the sarcophagus was originally made for a king of the Nineteenth Dynasty. It is stylistically similar to the head of Amenmesses in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (34.2.2).

Bibliography: Athanasi (1836) 52; Budge (1893) 1–4; Aldred (1961) 58; Porter and Moss (1964) 526; Dodson (1986) 196–98.

Sculpture Attributed to Ramesses III

13. Bust, Cairo, Egyptian Museum, CG 601

Gray granite, height: 0.50 m

From Medinet Habu?

This face of this sculpture is similar to the Osiride colossi at Medinet Habu.

Bibliography: Petrie (1925) 376, fig. 155; Murray (1930) 167–68, pl. XLIV (4); Borchardt (1936) 153, pl. 108.

14. Head, Cairo, Egyptian Museum, CG 599

Gray granite, height: 0.25 m

Abydos, south section

This statue has the same headdress as the standard-bearing statue from the Karnak Cachette (no. 2) and inlaid eyes like the striding statue (no. 6), the last to employ this technique in the New Kingdom.

Bibliography: Borchardt (1936) 151–52, pl. 108.

15. Statue of the king as Geb, Cairo, Egyptian Museum, CG 38234

Terra-cotta, height: 1.16 m

Found under the floor of room 46 at Medinet Habu

The provenance of this statue suggests its attribution to Ramesses III. The broad face is similar to the standard-bearing statue in Philadelphia (no. 5).

Bibliography: Daressy (1905) 68, pl. XIII.

16. Fragmentary head, Glasgow, Art Gallery and Museum, 9br–'12

Red quartzite, height: 0.72 m

From Heliopolis

The facial features recall the king's inscribed bust in Boston (no. 3).

Bibliography: Vandier (1958) 409, n. 1.

17. Head of a sphinx, private collection

Black granite, height: 0.18 m

From the precinct of Mut, Karnak

This fragment comes from the excavations of Margaret Benson. It may belong to one of the two sphinxes mentioned by Porter and Moss. Stylistically it is similar to the head in Strasbourg (no. 4).

Bibliography: Benson and Gourlay (1899) 42, 61, 236, pl. VII, fig. 1, facing 323; Christie's (London) Sales Catalogue of December 5, 1972, no. 2; Porter and Moss (1972) 259.

STELAE

Seven of the stelae are dated. The earliest two come from the temple of Amara West in Sudan (nos. 1 and 2). They were inscribed by Hori I and Hori II, the viceroys of Kush. The stelae from Serabit el-Khadim and Koptos (nos. 4 and 6) were probably dedicated on the occasion of the king's Heb Sed Festival. The text on the stele recorded in a photograph of the Pennsylvania University Museum (no. 5), mentions the donation of a cult statue of Ramesses III to the temple of Merenptah in Memphis. The event was recorded on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month of year 24. We have the death of Ramesses III mentioned on the stele from West Silsileh (no. 7). Dated on the festival of the Nile god in year 31, the text describes the king as *ma'a hrw*—that is, deceased.

Three rock-cut stelae at Kahzindariya, Siriya, and Tihna (nos. 10, 11, and 12) marked the quarry sites of stone for the king's buildings. The private stele dedicated to Ramesses III by the priest Meresitef (no. 13) represents Queen Tiy Mereniset as the consort of Setnakht and the mother of Ramesses III. Tiy Mereniset is also found on the relief fragment in Brussels (no. 14), where she is shown shaking *sistra* behind Ramesses III. The fragment in Edinburgh (no. 15) is one of the finest representations of the king, reminiscent of the best work at Medinet Habu. Three ostraca (nos. 17, 18, and 19) are probably sculptors' models used in the decoration of the tombs. The Turin ostrakon is the