

**Amenhotep II and the Mut Temple Complex at Karnak**

by Charles C. Van Siclen III

Despite the fact that there was a well-established temple complex for the goddess Mut at South Karnak during the reign of Tuthmosis III, there is little evidence of work there by his son and successor Amenhotep II. The principle remains of the younger king--parts of an alabaster shrine--were only moved to the Mut complex in reuse by Ramesses II,<sup>1</sup> and the only other royal monument of his known is a fragment of a black granite statue of Sakhmet which mentions Amenhotep II as "beloved of (the goddess) Nut."<sup>2</sup> There are, however, a number of statues of officials contemporary with Amenhotep II which are known from the site: those of the scribe Amenemhet,<sup>3</sup> the steward Kenamun,<sup>4</sup> and prince Tuthmosis, later Tuthmosis IV.<sup>5</sup>

In the autumn of 1987, I happened to visit the Kimbell Art Museum in Forth Worth, Texas, with the intention of viewing the fine, grey-green schist statue of Senenmut which they had acquired some time ago.<sup>6</sup> I was surprised to see on display another piece which was of interest to me by both its provenance (the Temple of Mut at Karnak) and its possible dating to the mid-Eighteenth Dynasty. This noteworthy piece,<sup>7</sup> found by Benson and Gourlay at the Temple of Mut,<sup>8</sup> is the upper half of a seated, lifesize pink granite figure of a king wearing a

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<sup>1</sup>On this building, see my book **The Alabaster Shrine of King Amenhotep II** (San Antonio, 1986).

<sup>2</sup>Information courtesy of Richard Fazzini. There is, of course, some question whether the Sakhmet statues at Mut are original to the temple complex either.

<sup>3</sup>CG 566, see Porter-Moss II<sup>2</sup>, 257 (5).

<sup>4</sup>CG 935, see *ibid.*, 262.

<sup>5</sup>CG 923, see *ibid.*, 260.

<sup>6</sup>AP85.2, partly published by Bernard V. Bothmer, "More Statues of Senenmut," **Brooklyn Museum Annual** 11 (1969-70): 127, figs. 2-5.

<sup>7</sup>AP 82.4; 102.8 x 45.7 x 38.1 cm.

<sup>8</sup>This seems to be identical to the statue formerly in the Winchester College Museum; see Porter-Moss II<sup>2</sup>, p. 259 as Ramesses II, with references to Benson's and Gourlay's publication.

white crown upon his head. The royal figure is dressed in a broad collar and what is probably the short jubilee robe,<sup>9</sup> and he holds the crook and flail in his hands. The back pillar, originally with a pointed top, contains traces of an inscription. Much of the statue is in remarkably good condition, although the statue's left side has eroded heavily. The base of the statue--which seems to once have had the names of Ramesses II--is now missing.

When originally published by Benson and Gourlay, this statue was attributed to Ramesses II,<sup>10</sup> but as the museum label notes, the piece is probably to be dated to either Amenhotep II or Tuthmosis IV. A detailed stylistic examination of the piece should decide the issue. Let it merely be noted here that the face is reminiscent of some of the more "oriental" representations of Amenhotep II. In particular, the face of the limestone statue of that king still in Karnak<sup>11</sup> seems to me an apt parallel. It is to be hoped that a full art historical study of the Kimbell piece will one day be undertaken.



The much damaged inscription on the back pillar is of little help in identifying the owner. The accompanying hand-copy shows what little can be made out, and it is offered with only the greatest reserve. It seems to read "Victorious king, who ... with (his) counsel, the king <of Upper and Lower Egypt> ...." It is uncertain whether the text dates to the original owner or to Ramesses II. The now missing base, if it can be located, may give some better clues as to the ancient history of the piece. In any case, this statue must be considered in looking at the work of Amenhotep II at Mut, although its placement there by its original owner is far from certain.

<sup>9</sup>The statue is said to be "osiride" in the museum.

<sup>10</sup>See note 8 above.

<sup>11</sup>Porter-Moss II<sup>2</sup>, 105 (318).