

PRELIMINARY REPORT
ON KAMOSE STELA AND OTHER INSCRIBED
BLOCKS FOUND REUSED IN THE FOUNDATIONS
OF TWO STATUES AT KARNAK

BY
LABIB HABACHI

Last season (1953-1954) M. Chevrier was lucky enough to discover under the ruins of the north tower of the second pylon of Karnak nearly all the fragments of a colossus inscribed with the names of the priest king Painodjem I of the XXIst dynasty. The hugeness of the statue, about 11 ms. high, its fair state of preservation, the rarity of statues of kings of this dynasty, the unusual feature of a queen's statue standing on the feet of the king, the beauty of the modelling and the perfect state of the queen's statue, all make the colossus of Painodjem one of the important statues found in Karnak.

We need not speak more about that statue, M. Chevrier will give all the details about its discovery, a description of it and the implication of the discovery. What we would like to say now is that not only did the statue itself prove to be important, but that its foundation as well as that of the neighbouring statue of Ramesses II, both of which were standing to the north of the western entrance of the Hypostyle Hall⁽¹⁾, proved equally important. In view of the good state in which the different parts of the colossus were found, it was decided to reconstruct it in the summer of 1954. Thus Dr. Hammad and myself decided to examine the remains of the foundation near which the fragments were brought to light to see if these remains really served as a foundation to the

⁽¹⁾ For the position of this colossus, see PORTER and MOSS, *Bibliography*, II, No. 13 in the Forecourt of the Great Temple of Amun in the plan reproduced on p. 10; see also p. 14.

colossus and its platform, if they were solid enough to support it again and if they contained any inscriptions at all.

The work of examining the foundation started on July 11th, 1954 and ended in less than five days with the discovery of some important inscribed blocks. During that work a part of the foundation of the statue of Ramesses II nearby was laid bare. It was clear then that the base of this second statue was inscribed later with the names of Ramesses IV and that much more important reused blocks were employed in its foundation. As far as we could remember, no inscribed blocks have been yet extracted from the foundations of statues in Karnak or any other temple nor have for that matter any of these foundations been yet examined. Now that the foundations of the two above-mentioned statues at Karnak proved to have been made up of reused blocks of some importance, it seems necessary to examine the foundations of other statues as well to see whether they too contain important blocks.

The colossus of Painodjem I proved to have been standing on a foundation made up of blocks of somewhat regular shape to a height almost equal to that of the neighbouring statue of Ramesses II. The importance of the foundation lies, however, in the fact that it is formed of blocks used originally in earlier buildings of Akhenaton, Amenophis III and others.

The foundation was formed of two layers, all of sandstone. The upper layer was composed of seven blocks; four of which were decorated.

One of these blocks, originally used as a part of the roof of the Hypostyle Hall of Karnak, was inscribed by Seti I and then usurped by his son. The remaining three blocks show Amenophis III in one of his *!b-sd* festivals. These blocks most probably came from a chapel erected in Karnak for that occasion and then taken to be reused in building the foundation of the statue of the priest king Painodjem.

One of these blocks is of particular importance (fig. 1). On one of the sides (146 cm. by 45 cm.) are the parts of two registers. In the lower one is the representation of the king who should have been shown in the dress usually worn in the *!b-sd* festival as is the case on the other blocks. In front of him is the upper part of his prenomen having the sun-disk and part of the goddess of Truth. According to the style of

the figures and inscriptions, the block has to be dated to the XVIIIth dynasty. We have, therefore, to restore the prenomen as either «Nebmare» of Amenophis III or «Kamare» of Hatshepsout. But we adopted

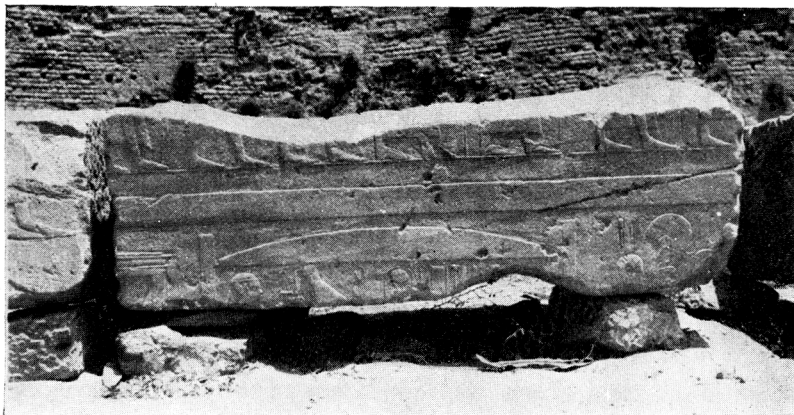


Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.

the former restoration, since the name and the figures of the sovereign depicted on these blocks were never touched, which would not be the case if Hatshepsout was the sovereign shown. Again it may be said that Hatshepsout celebrated only one *hb-sd* festival, while her great successor celebrated three⁽¹⁾, that the scenes of one of which were liable to be shown in Karnak.

⁽¹⁾ For these feasts, see BORCHARDT in *Ä. Z.*, LXXII, pp. 52-59 and HAYES, in *JNES*, X, pp. 82-86.

In the lower layer of the foundation ten blocks were found; five proved to be decorated. Apart from an undated block originally forming a part of a cornice, all the rest were decorated with scenes in the Amarna style. It may be interesting to reproduce here one of these blocks to show the beauty of the style and the unusual kind of representation (fig. 2). Here we have on one of the sides (156 cm. by 59 cm.) a scene showing a part of a valley with a shrub, a stylised tree and the heads of two antelopes. Beyond, perhaps on the cliffs, are two Nubians wrestling, while on each side of them is another man holding a stick. These men no doubt are awaiting their turn for another kind of game. A Nubian woman sitting elbows on knees and a recumbent dog seem to follow the wrestling. Below this scene there seems to have been another with persons also carrying sticks.

As we have stated above, the foundation of the neighbouring statue erected by Ramesses II proved also to be formed of reused blocks. Not all the foundation was examined for it was not easy to remove all the blocks, since the surviving part of the statue is too heavy to permit that. Still we were able to extract from the upper layer formed of six blocks three, which proved to have been inscribed. Two of these fit together showing a part of an ithyphallic god with uncomplete inscriptions. The third one had a figure of a king who might have been Tuthmosis IV, but it was later usurped by Ramesses II before it had been reused in the foundation of his statue.

The lower layer formed also of six blocks had two inscribed blocks. One of these formed parts of a pillar with brightly coloured inscriptions in bas-reliefs. It resembles very much pillars of Tuthmosis IV, found reused in the third pylon⁽¹⁾, but one side is recut and thus used for the second time before it was reused in the building of the foundation.

The second and last block found reused in the lower course of this foundation proved to be of particular importance. It was taken then from under the statue in the presence of Mr. Ah. Lotfi, then assistant architect of Karnak; Dr. Hammad was at that time in Cairo. I inspected it

⁽¹⁾ The first blocks from these pillars were found by Chevrier in 1935-1936 Season, see *Ann. du Serv.*, XXXVI, p. 137.

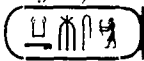
immediately and found, to my surprise and satisfaction, that it dealt with the war between Kamose and Apophis (Pl. I). We know that the first record coming of that war to be found was on the so-called Carnarvon Tablet discovered in Dra Abu el-Naga in 1908⁽¹⁾. Regarded by many Egyptologists as being simply a fictitious story, it was due to Newberry⁽²⁾ and Gardiner that the true value of this document was really appreciated. According to the latter scholar it appeared to be copy of a stela placed in one of the Theban Temples a few years after the occurrence of that events is described⁽³⁾. Chevrier found in 1932 and 1935 in the third pylon of Karnak two fragments with the beginning of the same text⁽⁴⁾. Though only containing about one sixth of the whole stela, it showed us the truth of the conclusions drawn by Newberry and Gardiner.

Our present stela deals undoubtedly with the war of the ruler of Thebes against the Hyksos⁽⁵⁾. It has many points of resemblance to the two fragments of the first stela found by Chevrier. For example on both stelae incised signs are painted blue and are separated by red incised lines about 5 cm. apart. The resemblance in style and expression is also striking⁽⁶⁾. All these facts indicate that the two stelae were carved at about the same time. The fact that the opening words of the new

⁽¹⁾ CARNARVON and CARTER, *Five Years Explorations at Thebes*, pl. XXVII, XXVIII and pp. 36-37.

⁽²⁾ *P. S. B. A.*, 35, 117 ff.

⁽³⁾ *The Defeat of the Hyksos by Kamose : The Carnarvon Tablet No. 1* in *J. E. A.*, III, 95 ff.; cf. 96-97 and *Id.*, with GUNN, *New Renderings of Egyptian Texts : The Expulsion of the Hyksos* in *J. E. A.*, V, 45 ff.

⁽⁴⁾ CHEVRIER, *Rapport sur les travaux de Karnak (1934-1935)* in *Ann. du Serv.*, XXXV, p. 111 and LACAU, *Une stèle du roi « Kamosis »*  in *Ann. du Serv.*, XXXIX, 245 ff.

⁽⁵⁾ For a report on this stela and the wars of liberation, see the article of the present writer, *La libération de l'Égypte de l'occupation Hyksos : A propos de la découverte de la stèle de Kamose à Karnak* in *Revue du Caire (Numéro spécial, No. XXXIII)*, pp. 52 ff). In the same number of this periodical, see also p. 107 and 111-115.

⁽⁶⁾ For the various peculiarities of the first stela, see LACAU, *op. cit.*, p. 247. As for the resemblance in style and expression, we shall treat these in our forthcoming publication of the new stela.

stela appear to be the continuation of a sentence, that the first occurrence of the Egyptian ruler's name for whom the stela was made is found so far down as in the 21st line ⁽¹⁾ and that references are found on this new stela to events which do not happen on it seem all to show that it is the continuation of another stela.

At any rate there seems no reason to doubt our stela is the continuation of the first one, the fragments of which were found by Chevrier; thus giving us more of the story of the struggle of Kamose against Apophis. The stela is of limestone carved from a block which was originally used as a pillar in a chapel erected by Sesostri I ⁽²⁾. Bits of reliefs showing this king are still to be seen on the sides. It is 210 cm. high (originally about 235 cm.) ⁽³⁾, 110 cm. wide and about 28 cm. thick. On the rounded top is the sun-disk with lowering wings and two pendant uraei. At the side of the uraei are two similar inscriptions each of which is continued by the one in the middle. These read : « He of Behdet, lord of heaven, he gives that he (the king) is given life, stability and dominion ». Underneath are 38 horizontal lines of text, and at the bottom left corner there is the figure of a standing man holding a fan with a column of inscription giving his name and his principal title in front of him. The proper text begins with the strange phrase which seems to be the continuation of a sentence... « the miserable communication out of your town, while you are forced away together with your army ». Commenting on this communication about or from Apophis, Kamose says « Your speech is mean when you made me a « chieftain », while you are a « ruler » in order to (?) desire for yourself the illegal things (?) for which you shall fall » (ll. 1-2). He then threatens his enemy with what will befall his army, his women and himself (ll. 2-5). Then he says : « I dispose the fleet (of ships) furnished with war implements (?), one (ship) after the other. I placed prow to stern in

⁽¹⁾ Usually this is found at the beginning as in the case of the first stela.

⁽²⁾ This must have formed part of a chapel different from the one rebuilt by Chevrier.

⁽³⁾ Only a small part of the rounded top is missing. The whole text is clear except for occasional breaks in lines 6-8, 23-25 and 38.

my forces (?), flying over the river as it were a falcon, my warship of gold at the front thereof. While I was like the Falcon thereof at their front, I caused the strong ship to search the frontier. The navigation after him as it were a kite uprooting (?) the muddy district (?) of Avaris» (ll. 5-8). Here he speaks of the panic which is rife among the women of his enemy compared with his favourable situation saying at the end «I shall drink of the wine of your vineyard which the Asiatics I captured press out for me; I shall lay waste your dwelling; I shall cut down your trees; I shall drag (?) your women to the ships' holds and I shall seize your chariotry» (ll. 8-13). At this point he speaks of a great victory over his enemy, when he says: «I did not leave a plank of the hundreds of ships of fresh cedar filled with gold, lapis lazuli, silver, turquoise and bronze battle axes without number, besides olive oil, incense, fat, honey, *ivtern*-trees, carob and pine (?) trees and their fine wood. All good products of Retenu, I took them completely» (ll. 13-15). He continues by telling how he did not leave anything to Avaris, meaning undoubtedly her king who believed that he was the only master of Egypt, and how he took revenge on all that the Hyksos had done to Egypt by laying waste their towns, and burning their dwellings reducing them to red mounds (ll. 15-18). Then comes an interesting passage in which Kamose says: «I captured his message on the upland Oasis route proceeding southward to Kush in a written letter, I found on it as follows in writing from the ruler of Avaris: Ouserre, the son of Rē^c 'Apophis' greets my son the ruler of Kush. Why do you rise as ruler without letting me know? Do you see what Egypt has done against me? The ruler within it, Kamose, given life, is attacking my land—but I did not attack him—in the manner of all that he has done against you. He chooses the two lands to harass them, my land and yours, and he has laid them waste. Come, journey alone (?) downstream. Behold he is here with me. Nobody will rise (?) with you against this Egypt. Behold I shall not let him go away until you arrive. Then we shall divide the towns of this Egypt and enjoy (?) prosperity and joy» (ll. 18-24). Kamose relates then how the Two Lands and the Foreign Lands were with him, how he was not negligent concerning his army or any part of Egypt, how the enemy was so afraid of him

that he sent asking for help from the ruler of Kush. He continues to relate how he gave the message back to the messenger of Apophis who was wild with fear when his messenger told him of all that Kamose was doing in the occupied district of the Cynopolite nome (ll. 24-29). At that point he relates to us his last strategic deed saying « I sent forth my strong troop who went overland to lay waste Bahria Oasis, while I was in Sako (El-Keis, north of Miniya) to prevent the rebels being behind me. I went upstream, strong of heart and joyful. I destroyed all the rebels on the road » (ll. 29-30). This being done he went back to Thebes passing by Assiut in the Inundation Season (ll. 30-32). Then he goes on to tell us « Everybody was at dawn with wild game; the port was crowded (?). And Thebes was in festival. Women and men came to see me; every woman embraced her neighbour; nobody was weeping, but incense (was burnt?) to Amûn in the Residence (?) in the place where it is said : 'Receive good things as his hand gives the scimitar to the son of Amûn Kamose' . . » (ll. 32-35). In the last three lines it is told how the king charged « the prince and governor, the one who is over the secrets of the Palace, the chieftain of the entire land, the chancellor of the king of L. E., the chief teacher of the Two Lands, the chief of the courtiers, the chief of the chancellors, the one strong of arm, Neshi » (ll. 36-37) to carve what had happened on a stela to be placed in Karnak, and how he did that in the best way (ll. 37-38). At the left corner in the bottom is the representation of that man with a horizontal line qualifying him as « The chief chancellor, Neshi ».

This is a summary of the contents of this stela, but we hope to be able before long to publish photographs, facsimilies, a complete translation and commentary of the whole text on the stela. Encouraged by great scholars such as Drioton, Gardiner and Hughes who already aided me in understanding some vague passages and who promised their precious help, I hope that this publication will meet with the approval of most of our colleagues as befitting so important a monument.

Labib HABACHI

