

Two Tutthmosid Statue Groups from Thebes
by Charles C. Van Siclen III

I. A Group Statue of Amenhotep II

Among the spectacular statues in the cache recently found at Luxor Temple was a statue group of Horemhab made in three pieces: a seated god, a kneeling king and a connecting base.¹ Had either the statue of the seated god or that of the kneeling king been found separately, either probably would have been assumed to be complete unto itself. With such an example in mind, that "complete" statues may be part of larger groups, it seems worthwhile to try to discover if any other such groupings might exist--as seems likely.

A painting in the upper chapel of the Theban tomb (no. 96) of Sennefer, mayor of Thebes and close confidant of king Amenhotep II, depicts New Year's gifts including a number of statues (fig. 1)² One of the statues represented (fig. 2) shows a kneeling figure of Amenhotep II presenting an offering table to a seated (?) god whose image has been hacked out.³ As depicted the king wears a *nemes* headdress and the *shendyt* kilt. The offering table which the king presents in the picture shows in elevation the foodstuffs which presumably would have been carved on the flat surface of an offering table in an actual example. Could part of the statue group depicted in the scene have survived? The answer is probably "yes."

One of the treasures of the Cairo Museum contemporary in date with the wall painting is a kneeling statue of Amenhotep

¹The Luxor cache was discovered in the winter of 1989; a full publication is in preparation by the late Sayid Tawfik and Mohamed el-Saghir. For a partial bibliography of some popular reports of the cache, see R.S. Bianchi, "New Light on the Aton," *GM* 114 (1990): 39, n. 28.

²Fig. 2 reproduces a drawing by N. de G. Davies in "The Egyptian Expedition, 1927-1928," *BMA* 23 (1928), no. 12, part 2, p. 49, fig. 6 (see Porter-Moss I², 198 (6)).

³Presumably the god hacked out is Amun, but since there is no trace of plumes in an undamaged area directly over the god, some other deity may also be possible.

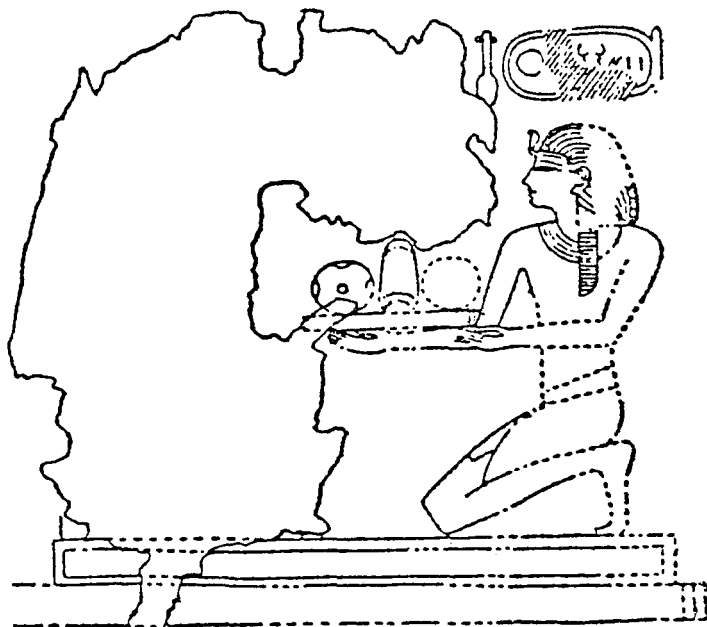


Fig. 2. Painting of Statue Group with Amenhotep II Kneeling with Offering Table (Detail of Fig. 1)

II presenting an offering table (fig. 4).⁴ The king is shown wearing the *nemes* headdress and the *shendyt* kilt. The statue is inscribed on its backpillar and upon the upper surface of the offering table, but it has no inscription upon its severely rectangular base. This lack of inscription on its base and the sharp angles thereon suggest that the Cairo statue of Amenhotep II offering fit into a larger unit. I would suggest that it is highly probable that the kneeling figure of Amenhotep II with offering table was a part of a large composite group--the full, three dimensional parallel being the recently discovered example from the Luxor cache--and that such a group is depicted in the tomb of Sennefer.

⁴CG 42073; for bibliography see Porter-Moss II², 138 (a), to which add K. Michalowski, *The Art of Ancient Egypt* (New York, 1968), p. 388, no. 367; idem., *Great Sculpture of Ancient Egypt* (New York, 1978), p. 133; and Claude Vandersleyen, *Das Alte Aegypten, Propylaen Kunstgeschichte 17* (Berlin, 1985), p. 246 and fig. 181a. The statue was found in the great cachette at Karnak. It is made of grey granite and stands about 120 cm high.



Fig. 3. Amenhotep II Kneeling with Offering Table (CG 42073)

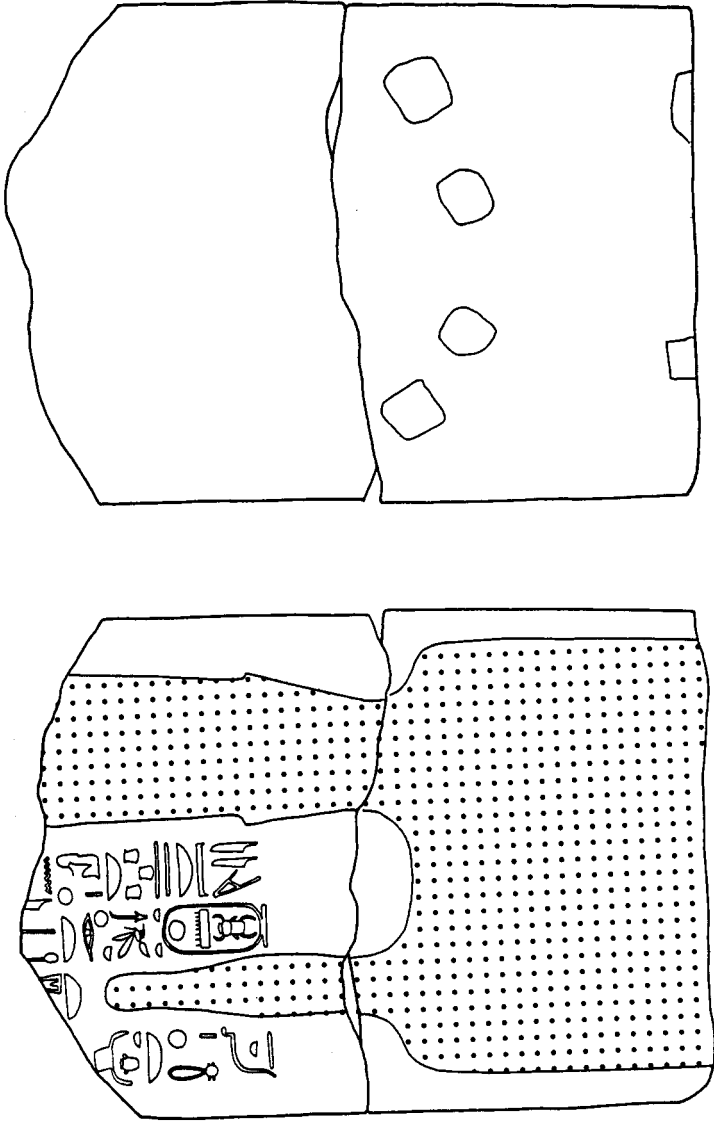


Fig.4. The Back Support of a Pair Statue
("Stela") of Tuthmosis III

II. A Seated Statue of Tuthmosis III with Amun

During the clearance of the ancient mound to the north of the pylon of Luxor Temple during the 1950s, a number of fragments of relief were brought to light. Two of these, connecting pieces originally identified as a "stela of Tuthmosis III,"⁵ are of interest in that they help to complete a long known and severely damaged statue group, and they shed some light on the movement of stone between Karnak and Luxor in the post-pharaonic period.

The compact limestone fragments in question (fig. 4) form a roughly rectangular slab, about 130 by 91 by 15 cm in dimension.⁶ Rather than being parts of a stela, it is evident that the two fragments when joined form the upper part of a pair statue. To the viewer's left was the now lost figure of king Tuthmosis III wearing the White Crown, and the texts around his missing figure may be read: "the good god, lord of action, the king of Upper and Lower Egypt Menkheperre, given all (life, all health,) all joy like Re forever." On the viewer's right may be seen traces of the hacked out cap and double plumes of a god identified as Amun-re by the adjacent epithet which describes the king as "beloved of A(mu)n-re, lord of the thrones of the Two Lands, lord of heaven."

A number of pair statues of the king and a god or queen are known from the reign of Tuthmosis III.⁷ These include two statues from the Karnak cachette, now in the Cairo Museum,⁸ a fragmentary statue from the small temple at Medinet Habu,⁹ two statues in the East (contra-) Temple of Tuthmosis III at

⁵Muh. Abdul-Qader Muhammad, "Preliminary Report of the Excavations Carried Out in the Temple of Luxor, Seasons 1958-1959 & 1959-1960," *ASAE* 60 (1968): 244, no. 9, 266, pl. 9b = Porter-Moss II², 538.

⁶Fig. 1 is adapted from the published note, *ibid.* In that photograph, the upper part of the front is shown with the lower part of the back. I first noted the stela in February 1988 and reexamined and measured it in February 1991.

⁷In part, see J. Vandier, *Manuel d'archéologie égyptienne III. Les Grandes époques: La Statuaire* (Paris, 1958), p. 304, R.N.E. 10.

⁸CG 42065 and CG 42066, see Porter-Moss II², 188.

⁹Porter-Moss II², 470

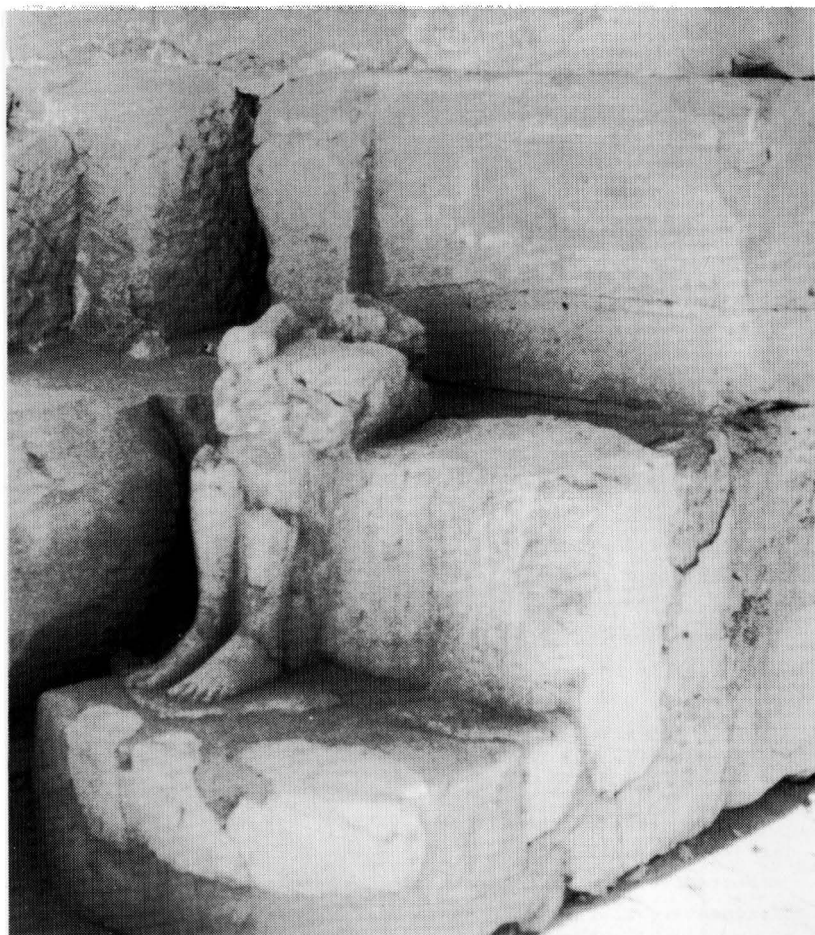


Fig. 5. The Tuthmosis III Pair Statue Fragment at Karnak

Karnak,¹⁰ and one represented in the tomb of Rekhmire.¹¹ An additional fragmentary pair statue of Tuthmosis III survives in the suite of rooms to be found just south of the granite shrine of Phillip Arrhidaeus.¹² All that survives of this last

¹⁰Porter-Moss II², 216 (19) and 217 (23).

¹¹Theban tomb 100, Porter-Moss I², 209 (7).

¹²Porter-Moss II², 105 (317). Located in the same room is the well-known pair statue of Amenhotep II with Amun, *ibid.*, p. 105 (318).

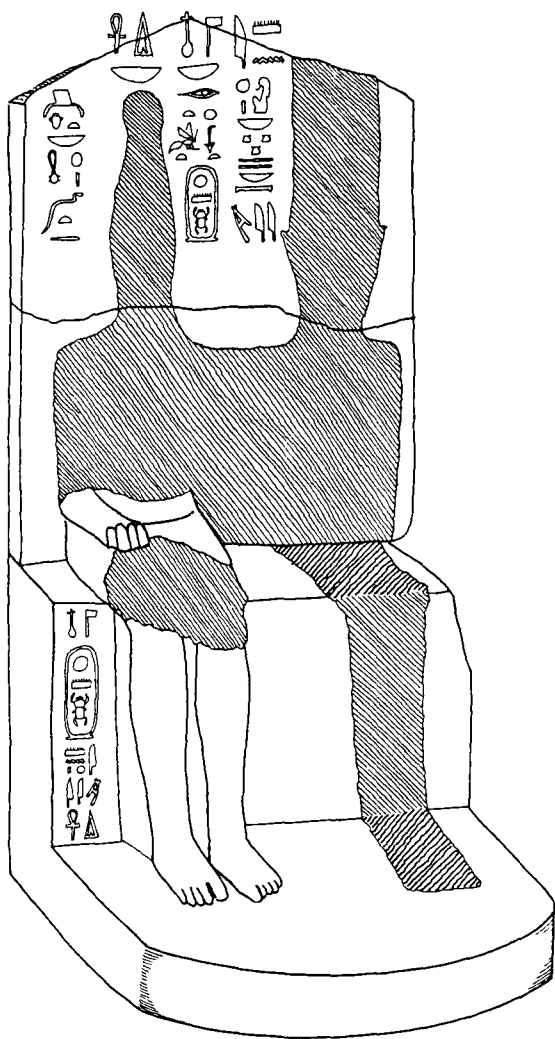


Fig. 6. Partial Reconstruction of the Pair Statue

compact limestone statue pair is its lower part (fig. 5).¹³ On the left are the remains of the figure of the king, identified by a column of text on the seat reading: "the good god Menkheperre, beloved of Amun-re, given life. A portion of the lap of the king still survives as well as his legs and feet but not the abutting back support. To the right, the figure of a seated god has been hacked away. The width of the preserved seat of the statue is 91-92 cm, and its depth is 36 cm plus the added thickness of the now missing back support."¹⁴ Given the complimentary fit of the Karnak and Luxor fragments, their common material, common dimensions, and common configuration (king Tuthmosis III left and the god Amun right), and common ownership, it is my view that the fragments form a single statue group (fig. 6).

One question resulting from this reunification of the fragments is under what circumstance did part of this Karnak statue end up in Luxor Temple? The situation of the discovery of the pieces at Luxor Temple suggests that they might be associated with the early Christian building which once stood before the pylon.¹⁵ When precisely the stone was brought to the area cannot be ascertained, but the pattern of socket holes on the reverse of the stela (fig. 4, right) suggests its possible use as the floor of a small curved niche or apse associated with the later religious building.

If it is correct that the fragments at Luxor Temple and the base at Karnak join, the presence of some of the fragments at Luxor Temple is rather important in that it conclusively shows that at least some of the reused blocks found at Luxor Temple were brought from Karnak. This fact may suggest a similar origin for some of the other reused materials discovered at or near Luxor Temple.

¹³The photograph was taken about 1983 while the area was still open to the public. I would like to thank Dr. el-Sayid Hegazy for enabling me to check my measurements of both the Tuthmosis III pair statue and that of Amenhotep II.

¹⁴The seat of the nearby Amenhotep II pair statue is 36 cm deep with a 15 cm thick back support.

¹⁵According to the published report, see note 6 above, the stela seems to have been found just north of the baptistry associated with the large church (dedicated to St. Thecla?) lying north of the pylon and east of the processional avenue.