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BIFAO 73 (1973), p. 193-200

Kenneth A. Kitchen

A Donation Stela of Ramesses III from Medamud [avec 2 planches].

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A DONATION STELA OF RAMESSES III FROM MEDAMŪD

Kenneth A. KITCHEN

In 1930, in the course of its fruitful excavations at Medamūd, the IFAO expedition unearthed a stela of Ramesses III which featured only briefly in the extensive series of excavation-reports [1]. Thereafter, it has been known principally from a brief citation of its 2nd and 3rd lines by Sir Alan Gardiner in his massive *Commentary* to Papyrus Wilbour [2].

Since then, the present writer first enquired about the text of this stela a decade ago, in connection with his *Ramesside Inscriptions* project, then still in the 'collecting and collating' stage of work. But it was not practical at that juncture for the former Director of IFAO (Dr. F. Daumas) to fulfil my request. When I had occasion to enquire again, the present Director, Dr. Serge Sauneron, kindly supplied me with photos of the stela, and permission to use these for the Ramesside texts project. In the interim, Mme. H.K. Jacquet had become interested in this stela in the wider context of a study of donation-stelae. I am indebted to her for allowing me to proceed with this present publication of the stela; and I am particularly grateful to Dr. Sauneron for his kind permission to publish this monument in the following preliminary study — most appropriately in the pages of *BIFAO* — prior to its eventual inclusion in *KRI,* Volume V.

Two main reasons have prompted this study. One is that this stela is far from being transparently legible throughout. Hence, it is desirable that its text should be available in photograph (see pls. XVI-XVII), and not only in the purely autograph edition of *KRI,* V, so that others may judge for themselves the varying levels of certainty or of hypothetical conjecture in my readings. The other reason is that

[1] Sandstone stela, Medamūd Inv. N° 5413; cf. *Médamoud 1930,* pp. 27, 28, 68, and Porter & Moss, *Topogr. Bibl.,* V, 1937, p. 149, who cited Drioton as intending editor of this and other texts.

[2] A.H. Gardiner, *The Wilbour Papyrus,* II, *Commentary,* 1948, p. 112 end, from data supplied by Varille.

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— quite unexpectedly — this stela seems to have a definite family connection with a well-known West-Theban tomb of two generations later. Nor are these the only points of interest, as will become evident (e.g., on royal statue-cults).

General Description.

With curved top (the winged disc lost but for traces), the stela is of ordinary form. Like other donation and boundary stelae, it has a sufficient depth of unadorned base for it to be erected in the ground at or near the territories to which it refers. The scene is of the simplest. At the right (facing left), Amun holds two sceptres, one vertical and one with its head inclined towards the figure (at left) of the king (facing the god). The king holds a staff in his left hand and offers (Maat?) with his upraised right hand. Sole remarkable feature of the scene, he wears the elaborate *hmhm*-crown (« triple Atef ») [1]. The texts inscribed vertically above these two have all but disappeared. Over Amun, traces of *t3* (?), and *nb* (?); over the king, perhaps «Lord of the Two Lands, Usimarē^{c} Meryamun».

Below this scene, we have the eight lines of the main text. At first sight, the seeming preponderance of deep-cut, easily-read hieroglyphs inspires confidence in a would-be reader. However, the entire monument has suffered surface-erosion of one kind or another, whereby the lighter-cut signs and parts of signs have all but disappeared [2], while the last two lines in particular have suffered from scraping and pitting of the surface [3].

Main Text (Fig. 1; pls. XVI-XVII).

(1) « Regnal Year 2, 1st (Month of) Peret, ⟨Day 1⟩, under the Majesty (of) the King of Upper & Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands, Usimarē^{c} Meryamun, Son of Rē^{c}, Lord of Epiphanies, Ramesses III, Ruler of Heliopolis.

[1] A comparatively rare type of crown until Graeco-Roman times (*hmhm*, cf. *Wb.*, II, 491 : 5-6). From the pharaonic period I know only of this example and that worn by Tutankhamun on the famed « state throne » from his tomb (e.g. Penelope Fox, *Tutankhamun's Treasure*, 1951, pl. 10; or Christiane Desroches-Noblecourt, *Tutankhamen*, 1963, pl. VI opposite p. 31).

[2] As if worn down smoothly by running water; so also the scene.

[3] For an even more heavily-worn (but outwardly similar) stela — probably of Year 6 of Ramesses III, also a donation-stela — see the forthcoming publication by G.A. Gaballa, *JEA* 59 (1973), 108-111, fig. 2, pl. 38.

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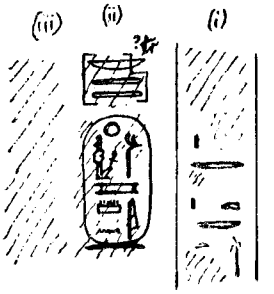
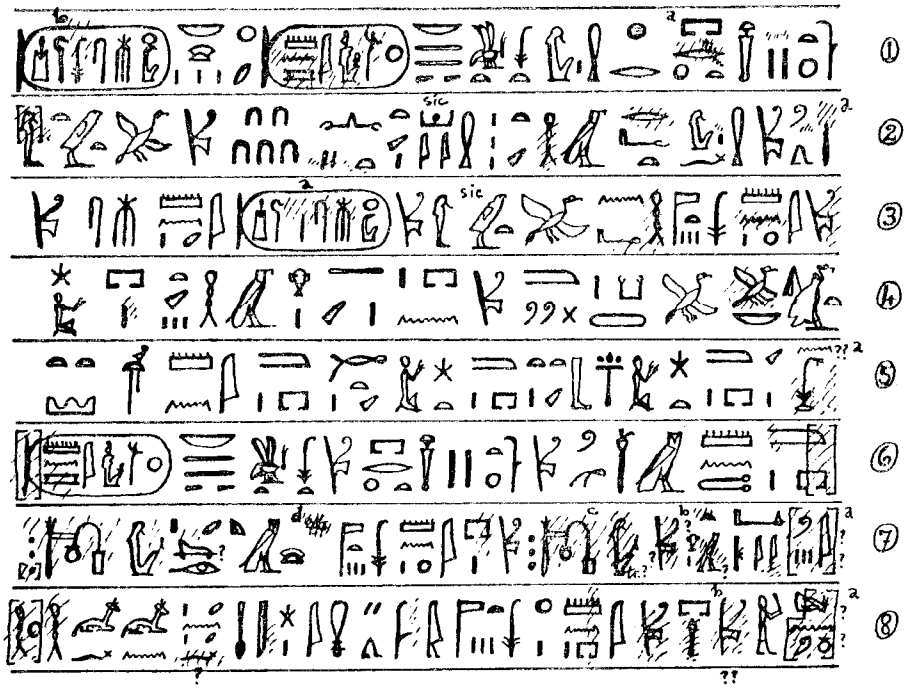


King → ← Amūn



Notes

1a: ⌒ very faint. 1b: 𓋴, not a 2nd 𓏏 (too close to 𓏏). 2a: Either [𓎛] or [𓏏]
3a: Either 𓋴 or 2nd 𓏏 possible. 5a: 𓈖 very doubtful. 7a: Room for 1 group, so:
7b: 𓐍, m ḫr n, all very conjectural. 7c: Possible trs. of sṯw šsw. 7d: Merely
a fault in the stone? 8a: Conj. restoration. 8b: Stroke, too vertical for a good 𓎛

Fig. 1. — Medamūd Inv. 5413.

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(2) His Majesty commanded that a donation of fields [1], 50 *arourae* [2], should be assigned to the statue (3) of Amenresonter, together with the statue of Ramesses III, Ruler of Heliopolis, Son of Amun and Born of (4) Mut, the Lord of Provisions, in the district of Per-en-ta, on the fields of Per-Duat :

(5) The [3] South is (at) [4] Per-Duat; the East is (at) Per-Duat; the North is (at) the Estate (*Pr*) of Amun; the West (6) is (at) the Estate (*Pr*) of Montu; — by a decree of Regnal Year 2, 1st Peret, ⟨Day 1⟩ [5], of the King of Upper & Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands, Usimarē‘ Meryamun.

(7) [They are??] [6] placed ⌜in charge of⌝ (??) [6] the ⌜Keeper⌝ of Archives [7] (« Writings ») of the Estate (*Pr*) of Amenresonter [8], Khaemope [9], ⌜son of the Osiris⌝ [10] (?) the Keeper of Archives, (8) [Deput]y [11] of the Treasury of the

[1] *Lit.* «fields which were donated» (*ḥnkyt*); this is the passage cited by Gardiner, *Wilbour*, II, 112 end.

[2] Faulty transcription of hieratic of *sḏȝt* by the stonecutter.

[3] If an *n* were to be read here (cf. Fig. 1, note 5a), its function is obscure.

[4] Or : « The South is in Per-Duat», etc.; either *m* of predication, or the preposition *m*. For the same construction of cardinal points, *m*, and locations, cf. the twin donation-stelae from Abu Simbel under Ramesses II published by Gauthier, *ASAE* 36 (1936), 49 ff. (esp. 54 ff.) and his pl. III.

[5] Probably so to be understood both here and in line 1.

[6] [*iw·w*] *dyt* ⌜*m-ḫr-n*⌝ (??). The restoration hangs on the correctness of the reading *dy* which seems to fit the traces very well. Before it, one may restore one group of the size indicated. The difficulty resides in the traces after *dy*. The restoration given assumes (i) that the upper hole is a destroyed *t;* (ii) that the bird (??) was cut to an uneven depth (thus, only partly preserved?); (iii) that it and the following signs have suffered from accidental gouging. All possible, but open to query. However, some such overall restoration seems required by general context.

[7] The *sȝw* is perhaps half-hieratic, and only its seat is clearly preserved : the edge, vessels and plural dots of *sšw* are visible.

[8] I can make no sense at all of the isolated « trefoil » mark after *nsw-nṯrw*. As it has been left on its own by the stonecutter, one might infer that it is a fault or chip in the stone from prior to inscribing the text.

[9] The traces of *Ḥ‘-m-ipt* seem clear, even if the *ipt* is small. For lack of a personal determinative, cf. also Imiseba in line 8.

[10] The egg and stroke for *sȝ* seem assured, though the former is close to the small *ipt*. The eye (*ir*) below seems inescapable, with which the low throne over it would fit, to give *Wsir*, « Osiris ». It is difficult to suggest a convincing alternative.

[11] This restoration is suggested (i) by the occurrence elsewhere of this title for Imiseba

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Estate of Amenresonter, Imiseba, justified, — (from) son to son [1], heir to heir [2], fore[ver] » [3].

Background Commentary.

At first sight, this stela simply records a royal land-grant to the Theban archivist Khaemope for the upkeep of cults of Amun and a statue of Ramesses III, in his 2nd year (*c.* 1192 B.C.) [4], much like others of the Ramesside period [5].

But the *persons* commemorated by this stela — Khaemope and his father Imiseba — immediately arrest the attention. For, they belong to a family whose descendant is well-known from his beautifully painted tomb up the hill of Sheikh Abd-el-Qurna in Western Thebes — the *wa'b*-priest, Chief of the Altar, Chief of Temple Archives of the Estate of Amun, Imiseba, owner of Tomb No. 65, which he usurped from its 18th-Dynasty owner and redecorated throughout, early in the reign of Ramesses IX (*c.* 1125 B.C.).

In that tomb, Imiseba (B; titles as above) records himself as son of a Chief of Temple Archives of the Estate of Amun in Karnak, Amenhotep, who was son of a Chief of Temple Archives of Amenresonter in Karnak, Khaemope, who in turn was the son of a Deputy of the Treasury of the Estate of Amun in Karnak, Imiseba

A (see Background Commentary), and (ii) by the « striking man » determinative following a trace consistent with the *idnw*-sign.

[1] *Lit.*, « son to his son », if an *f* is here correctly read; its traces look almost like *n* and *f* cut over each other.

[2] *Lit.*, « heir to his heir », the *f* here being indubitable to my eye.

[3] Initial *ḥ* of (*n*)*ḥḥ* is visible; room for disc and second *ḥ* broken away.

[4] Assuming that the reign of Ramesses II be set at 1290-1224 B.C., and that Merenptah reigned 10 years, Amenmesses 5 years, Sethos II 6 years, and Siptah with Tewosret 8 years, then Setnakht 2 years. There is no warrant for giving Merenptah 20 years, a figure unsupported by assured regnal dates (lacking at Deir el Medineh; Ramesseum jar-dockets can be R. II or III, being so few for years 11-19), and contradicted by genealogical data to be presented by Morris L. Bierbrier. On the above date and data, the accession of Ramesses III would fall *c.* 1193 B.C., hence the 2nd year in *c.* 1192 B.C.

[5] Royal statues, cf. that of Ramesses III at Memphis noted below (cf. p. 200 n. 1) and that of Ramesses VI dedicated by Pennē in Nubia. For Amun, cf. the twin stelae published by Gauthier (p. 196, n. 4, above).

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(A), the wives of these four men also being named [1]. That Imiseba A and Khaemope are none other than the father and son of the Medamūd stela of the 2nd year of Ramesses III at once leaps to the eye. The titles and genealogies of both monuments may thus be set out :

Tomb 65			*Medamud, IFAO Inv.* 5413	
Depty, Tr. Amun, Knk.	*Imiseba A*	= f *Ta-mit...*	Kpr Archives, Depty Tr. Amun	*Imiseba A*
Ch. T-Archvs Amun, Knk.	*Khaemope*	= f *Wiay*	Kpr Archives, of Amenresntr.	*Khaemope :* Yr. 2, R. III
Ch. T-Archvs Amun, Knk.	*Amenhotep*	= f *Mut-em-meres*		------
Ch. Altar, Ch. T-Arch, A, Knk.	*Imiseba B*	= f *Te(n)t-pa-setja :* early R. IX.		
	f *Isty*			

If my textual reading be correct, Imiseba A was already dead by Year 2 of Ramesses III, being termed both « Osiris » (?) and « justified » on the Medamūd stela, unlike his son Khaemope. One may, therefore, envisage Khaemope as a man at least 30/40 years old, whose father may have died a little earlier (aged *c.* 50/60?), passing on his archival office (but not the deputy-treasurership) to his son. If so, then Khaemope himself would have been about 60/70 years old by the death of Ramesses III 30 years later. By then, he had probably already (by Year 20 of R. III?) have passed on his post to his own son Amenhotep. On that reckoning, Amenhotep might have been aged about 45/50 at the death of Ramesses III, and have completed his term of office aged about 60/70 under Ramesses V-VII. Thus, Amenhotep's son Imiseba B may have been born by the middle of Ramesses III's reign, have grown up under R. III-IV-V, and in turn have succeeded his own father Amenhotep as archivist by about the time of Ramesses VI-VII, serving

[1] Cf. *LDT*, III, 256, lower part (collated, plus own copy and photos).

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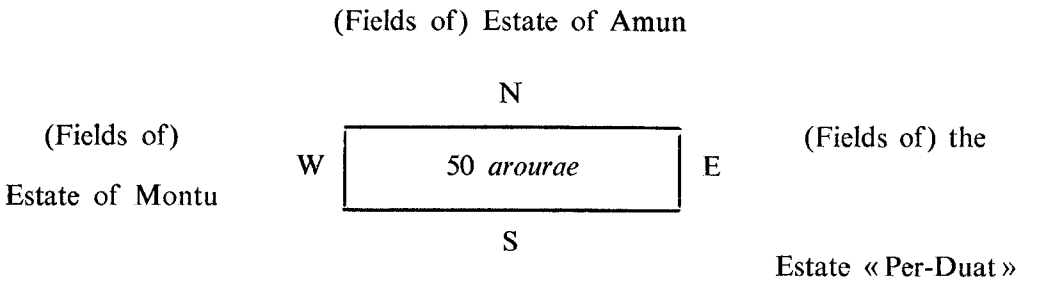
about 20 years from Ramesses VI/VII into the first decade of Ramesses IX, when he annexed the old tomb-chapel at Sheikh Abd-el-Qurna, having it decorated with the richly-painted scenes that adorn it still. In fact, Imiseba B may already have been dead and safely buried by Year 9 of Ramesses IX (Imiseba being up to 60 at death?), when his tomb-chapel was already being visited as a place of the « justified ones » by necropolis workmen who left a graffito in the (open?) tomb of Ramesses VI [1]. One may thus glimpse the fortunes of this family through four generations from the late 19th Dynasty (when Imiseba A must have flourished) to the late 20th. Perhaps the benefice recorded on the Medamūd stela descended to Khaemope's posterity, and the additional income it brought Imiseba B may have helped him to afford the admirable (if second-hand) chapel known as Tomb 65 today.

The location of the plot of land mentioned on this stela is totally obscure; Per-en-ta and Per-Duat as toponyms seem unrecorded elsewhere, while Amun certainly and Montu probably had estates of land all over the Thebaid, Medamūd included. The find-spot of the stela (against N. enclosure-wall of the great temple of Montu in Medamūd) is no help, as this would have been either a secondary location, or a reflection of placing the land-record at a temple (rather than on-site) for consultation. Thus, we can know little or nothing of the location of the 50 *arourae*, and I content myself at present with providing herewith a diagram of its setting as the inscription has it.



[1] Champollion, *Notices Descriptives*, II, 635; Spiegelberg, *Graffiti aus der thebanischen Nekropolis*, 1921, p. 92, N° II. The High Priest of Amun Amenhotep is named in Imiseba B's tomb 65, so it was decorated after Year 2 of Ramesses IX (when Ramesses-nakht I was still in office, cf. Helck, *JARCE* 6 (1967), p. 137), even if finished by Year 9.

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Of greater interest is the special name of the statue of Ramesses III here endowed : « the statue of Ramesses III (etc.), Son of Amun and Born of Mut, the Lord of Provisions » (*lit.*, « the Provision »). This *precise* formulation, but adjusted to Memphite theology, occurs in a further cult-foundation in the 24th year of Ramesses III at Memphis, in favour of « the great statue of Ramesses III, Son of Ptah and Born of Sekhmet, the Lord of Provisions » [1], with a staff of four people under the *wa'b*-priest Merenptah, « from son to son, heir to [heir] », like the Medamūd stela.

Remarkable is the occurrence, thus, of *two* statues of Ramesses III, surnamed by means of the same formula : « Son of god X, and Born of goddess Y, the Lord of Provisions » (*p3 nb p3 k3*) — and both statues in relation to endowments administered by the pharaoh's subjects on land granted by him [2]. One might suggest that, under Ramesses III, statues in this category were given this type of name, giving the king as offspring of the divine couple of wherever the statue was installed, plus the epithet « Lord of Provisions » — perhaps in line with the long-established doctrine of the king as prosperer of his people [3].

Thus, while my main aims have been to offer a commentated reproduction of the text of this monument in photo and line, and to indicate its wider family connections, it is also happily true that the Medamūd stela sheds welcome light on other matters besides those germane to my immediate purposes.

[1] Publication by A.R. Schulman, *JNES* 22 (1963), 177-184 with pl. 7; usefully supplemented by W. Helck, *JNES* 25 (1966), 32-41.

[2] On which matter, see Helck, *Materialen zur Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Neuen Reiches*, II, 1960, pp. 224-233, and *JNES* 25 (1966), 39-41.

[3] E.g., from back in the Middle Kingdom, where one even meets the phrase « the King is Ka », « Provision », in the Instruction excerpted by Sehetepibre (Sethe, *Aeg. Lesestücke*, p. 68 : 19 end); related concepts, cf. Elke Blumenthal, *Untersuchungen zu Ägyptischen Königtum des Mittleren Reiches*, I, 1970, pp. 349 ff., 440 f.

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The Main Text.

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