

⁵ Vgl. W. M. F. Petrie, *Amulets*, Taf. VI, 77, S. 21.

⁶ Vgl. H. R. Hall, *Catalogue...*, Nr. 2493 und 2494. S. auch J. Ward, *The Sacred Beetle*, London 1902, S. 85, Taf. VII, 367-368; W. M. F. Petrie, *Scarabs and Cylinders with Names*, London 1917, Taf. LII, 15-18; F. S. Matouk, *Corpus du scarabée égyptien*, I, Beyrouth 1971, S. 138 und Taf. auf der S. 221 (Nr. 860 und 861). Vgl. J. Leclant, *op. cit.*, Anm. 79, Sp. 509-510.

⁷ Vgl. Anm. 1 und 2.

⁸ Inventarnummer MAK/AS 1889/20 - 1889/49. Durchmesser dieser Objekte beträgt 2,1-2,3 cm, Dicke: 0,7-1,2 cm. Alle Rosetten besitzen zwei parallele waagerechte Öffnungen 0,3-0,4 cm breit.

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THE PLUME DRESS OF RAMSES III FROM THE TOMB OF AMENHERKHOPSEF

A scene featuring the reception of Ramses III by Isis in the tomb of prince Amenherkhepshef (N^o 55 in the Valley of the Queens) ¹ at the first glimpse seems to be a common one. However, a closer examination reveals here several unusual characteristics of the royal dress.

The scene, located in the antechamber left to the entrance to the elongated passage, is rendered in a careful bas-relief and a good state of preservation of its colours enables an identification of the colouring of the king's attire.

That latter one is quite striking (Fig. 1) and one is tempted to surmise that its presence in the tomb is not accidental. Ramses III, facing right and led by Isis, wears a dress which appears to associate him with some bird. The dress may be clearly divided into two parts, the upper of which consists of the Falkenjackette ² put on a short-sleeved, reddish shirt with many white dots scattered all over. The falcons, composing the Falkenjackette, are flattened against the shirt and clench their claws around the šn sign on the king's belly. The white undergarment shows through the shirt.

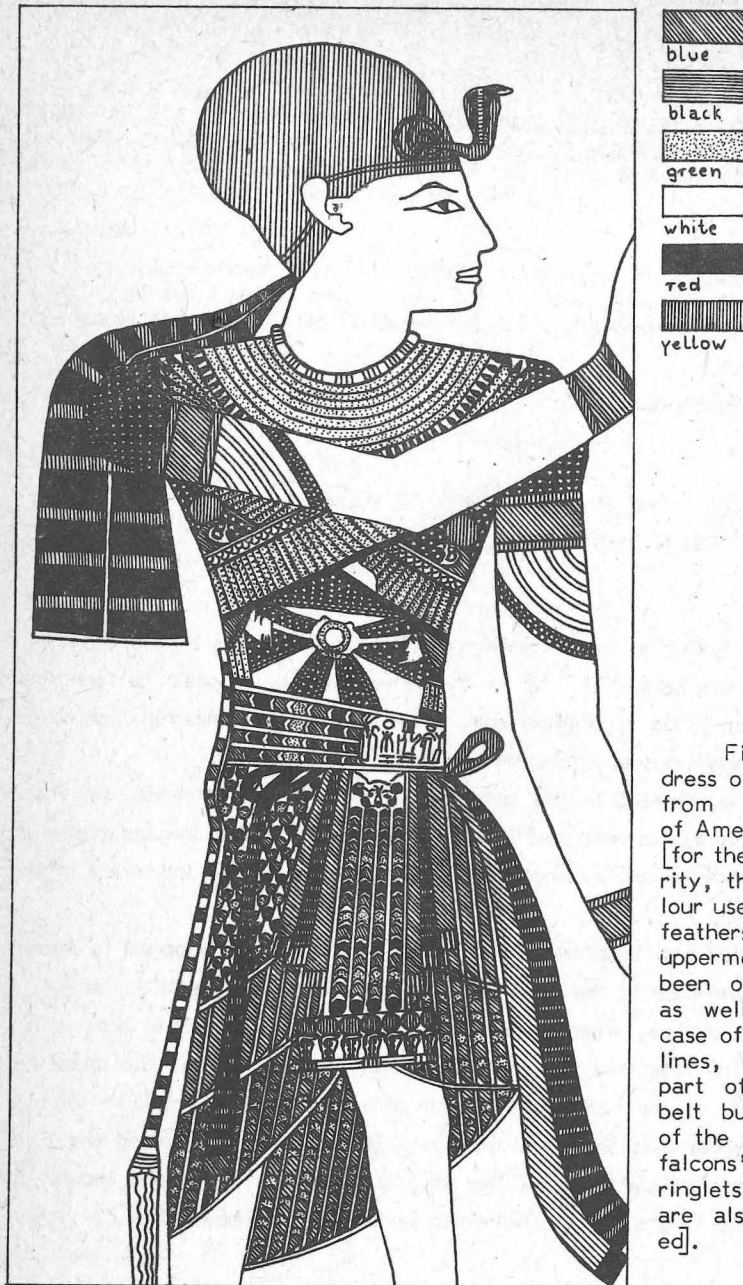


Fig. 1. The dress of Ramses III from the tomb of Amenherkhepshef [for the sake of clarity, the yellow colour used in the short feathers of the left uppermost piece has been omitted here as well as in the case of the parting lines, king's tail, part of necklace, belt buckle, parts of the sporran and falcons' legs. The ringlets of the *hprš* are also not marked].

The lower part of the dress is formed by a feathered kilt being, in spite of its relatively modest shape, an elegant and refined piece of garment due to its colouring.

The kilt is supported by means of the plumed belt composed of four rows of feathers. At the front, the belt terminates into a clasp containing the royal names (Wsr-M3^Ct-R^C mrj-Jmn R^C-msj-sw ḥq3-Jwnw). This belt sinks vertically to form a kind of a sporran with a leonine head at the top and 7 uraei reposing on a symbolical mat at the lower end. The colours of the belt and sporran run as follows: blue-red-blue-green-blue-red-blue. They are interspersed by yellow intervals.

The very kilt consists of several feathered pieces, divided vertically by the sporran and diagonally by slightly curved, yellow lines. The left uppermost piece is composed of small scale-shaped feathers which are yellow with red, blue and green tips. These feathers are marked by a red line. Below that piece two others are placed, the first of which is composed of long, pointed blue feathers while the lowest one consists of long, pointed blue and green feathers. The border between the feathered part is marked by yellow lines.

Right to the sporran only two plumed pieces appear, the upper one consisting of long, pointed blue feathers and the lower one being arranged of long, pointed blue and green feathers. Both these pieces are parted by a yellow line and in both cases the feathers are long and pointed, so they appear to derive from the bird's wing rather than from the tail or bodily plumage.

The occurrence of only just two pieces on the right side of the sporran may be tied to the tucking up of the kilt at the front, where it reaches just above the knee. On the other hand, at the rear the kilt reaches down as far as the middle part of the calf.

Three ribbons droop in an symmetrical arrangement at either side of the sporran. Their colours are blue, red-yellow and blue respectively and they have fringes as well. The long vertical red and yellow ribbon with a blue tip runs down across the rear feathered pieces. At the kilt's front there are two long ribbons, a red-yellow and a blue one, both slightly bent up, apparently due to king's movement.

The whole apparel is completed by the buff *hprš*, rich necklace and blue bracelets on arms and wrists. Underneath the *hprš* emerges a long red and yellow ribbon which widens gradually downwards. The king wears also the sandals, typical in the royal iconography of the Ramesside times (not shown on Fig. 1).

Such a wholly feathered kilt appears to be an unusual phenomenon among the royal iconography of the said period. Its shape is here beside the point, for similar one may be spotted even in the temple of Ramses III at Medinet Habu ³ (the king before Osiris in the Chapel of Osiris or the king entering the temple). The basic difference consists in the feathery character of the kilt in question.

It should be also noted that at the right side of the same entrance to the passage in the tomb of Amenherkhepshef, Ramses III wears another plumed skirt in a scene of his reception by Hathor. However, it won't be treated here in more detailed way. Its form is quite similar to the previous one and there are only more small feathers, which form the upper section of it. Moreover, the Falkenjacke in that second scene is lacking and there are also several other differences with regard to the royal attire here when compared with the dress worn by Ramses III while received by Isis.

During the New Kingdom, a special feathered dress (the Horus dress) happens to appear at least since the times of Thotmes I ⁴. However, this homogeneous feathered garment occurs to the author's present knowledge only in the temples and seems to underline the royal power in its earthly dimension. On the other side, in the tomb of Amenherkhepshef we encounter a feathered garment worn in fact not by the owner of the tomb, probably later Ramses VI ⁵, but by his father.

Considering the colouring of this dress, we may compare it with the colour scheme of falcons composing the Falkenjacke. The scale-shaped feathers of the kilt's left uppermost piece coincide with the colours of similar feathers in the upper section of falcons' wings. The long feathers in the wings are green with red tips and black speckles. The birds' chest and abdomen remain blue, while the plumage of legs is white (Fig. 2).

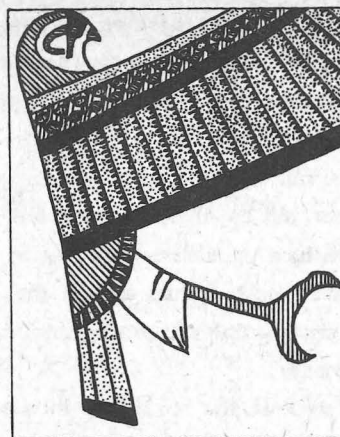


Fig. 2. Details of colours of one of the falcons from the Falkenjacke.

The colouring of the royal kilt may also be juxtaposed with that of the falcon from the Papyrus of Anhai (Fig. 3) ⁶.



Fig. 3. Details of colours of the falcon from the vignette of the Papyrus of Anhai.

The falcon has the rear part of its head blue, divided by a red line from a black eye against the yellow background. The feathers on its chest are scale-shaped and green with blue tips. The pointed long feathers of the wing are green, while the tail feathers remain green with the red ends. The details of the plumage and the speckles are marked by the black ink. The plumage of legs is yellow with brown tips.

It appears so that linking the colours of the royal kilt with those of the vulture may be excluded. First, the vulture appears principally in connection with the queens. Secondly, no black colour occurs among the colours of the royal kilt discussed here, which is employed among the vulture's colours at least since the XVIII-th dynasty.

It comes out from the above description that the royal kilt in question tends to emphasize the king's character as Horus. Another problem arises, why such a dress happened to occur in this tomb. It must be stressed that even in his own tomb in the Valley of the Kings Ramses III never wears such kind of a dress ⁷.

The Spell 74 of the Coffin Texts expresses the belief in the existence of Horus of the Underworld. According to it, Horus have descended into the Netherworld in order to revive Osiris:

... How fair are you that rise today!

Like Horus of the Underworld

rising today, appearing from the great flood...⁸

Moreover, Spell 312 of the Coffin Texts describes the trip undertaken by the Divine Falcon to the Dw3t ⁹. The Falcon, "a dweller in beams of light", appears to be a messenger of Horus, who has invested him with the form of the god's sacred bird.

It may be concluded that in the tomb of Amenherkhepshef we encounter in the royal person of Ramesses III-a form of Horus of the Underworld. This aspect of Horus, reflected in the king's iconography, seems to complement in some way the aspect of the living Horus, ruling the world in the pharaoh's capacity and embodied earlier in the Horus dress of the XVIII dynasty.

Notes

¹ B. Porter, R. Moss, Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs and Paintings I, The Theban Necropolis, Part 2, Royal Tombs and Smaller Cemeteries, Oxford 1973, pp. 750, 759. See also recently: F. Abitz, Ramses III in den Gräbern seiner Söhne (OBO 72), Universitätsverlag Freiburg Schweiz, Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, Göttingen 1968, pp. 18-26.

² L. Borchardt, Die Königsjacke [in:] Allerhand Kleinigkeiten, pp. 13-18.

³ William J. Murnane, United with Eternity, A Concise Guide to the Monuments of Medinet Habu, The Oriental Institute, University of Chicago and the American University in Cairo Press, 1980, Figures 42, 57.

⁴ T. Podgórski, Royal Plume Dress of XVIII Dynasty, MDAIK 40, 1984, pp. 103-121.

⁵ W. J. Murnane, op. cit., p. 42, also K. A. Kitchen, Ramses VI [in:] Lexikon der Ägyptologie V, 1985, col. 124 Amenherkhepshef II-RC-msj-sw Jmn-hr-hpš. f.

⁶ "Journal of Egyptian Archaeology" 51, 1965, pl. 1.

⁷ Courtesy Dr. Marek Marciniak, Berkeley.

⁸ A. de Buck, The Egyptian Coffin Texts, Chicago 1939, Spell 74, after R. T. Rundle Clark, Myth and Symbol in Ancient Egypt, Thames and Hudson 1959, p. 127.

⁹ A. de Buck, Coffin Texts, Spell 312 and JEA 35, p. 87 ff.