

## ***Red granite statue of Sobekemzaf I***



Probably from Karnak, Egypt  
17th Dynasty, around 1650 BC

This impressive sculpture is a very rare example of a royal statue from the Seventeenth Dynasty (about 1650-1550 BC), and in fact is the largest piece of royal sculpture known of that date. Little is known about King Sobekemzaf I, though he certainly undertook building work in the temple at Medamud. The inscription on the statue mentions Amun-Re, making it likely that the statue was erected at Karnak.

The statue shows an interesting mixture of sculptural styles. While the face is very carefully modelled and naturalistic, the torso is carved in a very stylized manner. The empty eye-sockets now appear very striking, though the sculpture would originally have had inlaid eyes.

Close examination has revealed how these were held in place. While this was often done with plaster, here two small holes have been drilled through the eyelids, so that dowels could be passed through to hold the inlay in place. This method was evidently successful; the damage around the eyes suggests that considerable force was needed to remove the inlays.

W.V. Davies, *A royal statue reattributed*, British Museum Occasional Paper 28 (, 1981)

G. Robins, *The art of ancient Egypt* (London, The British Museum Press, 1997)