

OPENING SEQUENCE

SUPER TITLES

UNITED NATIONS - #288

END OPENING SEQUENCE

ABU SIMBEL

TRAVELLING SHOT OF
NUBIAN NILE

(MUSIC)

NARRATOR V.O.:

Nubia is a vast land - not a separate nation, but a region. Some of it is in the Sudan, some in Egypt.

MEN IN BOAT

The life of Nubia has always clustered along the Nile or ranged out on its broad waters.

NUBIAN LIFE SHOTS

(MUSIC)

The life of Nubia was ancient when Athens was young, before Rome existed.

TOURISTS AT TEMPLE

Nubia has been called a three-hundred-mile long, open air museum.

MORE TEMPLES, STATUARY

These temples and monuments and the art they contain are not only among the oldest, but also the most splendid examples of man's belief in his relationship with an eternal and divine life.

COLONNADE OF STATUARY

It would be hard to find anyone who would wilfully destroy the treasures of Nubia.

ASWAN HIGH DAM

But mankind insists on something called progress. This is the Aswan High Dam. It will open up thousands of acres for farming, and will supply 10 billion kilowatt hours per year. It will also back up an artificial lake which will bury most of ancient Nubia under 190 feet of water.

VILLAGE PARTLY UNDER
WATER

The people of Nubia already have been moved to new homes and new lives far from the banks of the Nile.

PHILAE UNDER WATER

Since early in this century, when first Aswan Dam was completed the old temples on the island of Philae have been under water much of the year. When it became apparent that these and all the rest of the Nubian monuments would be lost forever, UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, broadcast a world-wide appeal to save them.

KALABSHA

Almost all of the temples of Nubia have been saved. Even Kalabsha - the size of Notre Dame - has been moved to higher ground.

NEFERTARI TEMPLE

But Abu Simbel was a special case. Here we see the smaller temple of Rameses' Queen, Nefertari. Abu Simbel comprises two rock-carved temples built by Rameses the Second. (MUSIC)

ON ROW OF STATUARY

Abu Simbel has been called the glory of Nubia. It is the most spectacular of all the Nubian monuments and is without parallel as an architectural and artistic achievement in the entire Middle East.

(MUSIC)

GREAT TEMPLE

The Great Temple of Abu Simbel. The two temples were built by Rameses the Second almost 3,300 years ago to celebrate the glories of his reign, which lasted 66 years.

NUBIAN FRIEZE

When Rameses came to power, Egypt under the Pharaohs was already more than 2,000 years old. It had conquered and enslaved the Nubians, developed a vast system of agriculture along the Nile - built the Pyramids and developed its arts and sciences.

WAR SCENES

When Rameses' rule began, Egypt was facing renewed threats from its traditional enemies, particularly the Hittites.

RAMESES RAMPANT

By the middle of his long reign, Rameses the Second had pushed back all the would-be invaders, and had carried the battle on to the Hittites' own soil.

PULL BACK FROM
NEFERTARI STATUE

Rameses was revered as a great hero, and Egypt was able to go on living at peace in her golden age.

GREAT TEMPLE

The great temple is dedicated to the foremost gods, and to Rameses himself - the King God.

INTERIOR

It is one of those quirks of history that the great temple of Abu Simbel was forgotten and lost for more than a thousand years. Dr. Henry Fisher is head of the Department of Egyptology at New York's Metropolitan Museum, and secretary of the US Committee to save Abu Simbel.

FISHER SEQUENCE

SYNCH:

Fisher: It wasn't until 1813 that the Great Temple of Abu Simbel was re-discovered. John Lewis Burckhardt, a Swiss explorer, had just been visiting the adjacent small temple of Nefertari about which he'd been told by the local Nubians, and he was about to climb back up the hill the way that he'd come when, for some reason, he was impelled to look beyond a huge drift of sand just to the south, and there he saw one colossal head, completely exposed, above the surface. And from the scale of that exposed head, and the presence of the tops of two other statues above the sand, he made the reasonable deduction that these were seated statues and that they guarded the entrance to an enormous temple. By 1828, when this picture was drawn by a Scotsman, David Roberts, several others had visited the site and a good deal of the sand had been cleared away. Back in 1817, Giovanni Guiseppe Belzoni dug away enough of the sand to gain entry into the Great Temple. Later he drew this remarkably inaccurate but interesting

FISHER SEQUENCE (CONTD.)

picture of the temples as he remembered them. David Roberts, in 1838 gave the world this first clear view of the interior of the Great Temple. It is now thought that the damaged statue lost its head as a result of an earthquake shortly after the temple was built.

The construction of the temples of Abu Simbel is regarded as an outstanding achievement in Rameses II's own time. But even in the light of modern technology, it remains a marvel. Both temples are carved in one piece of solid rock. There is an inscription at Abu Simbel which says "his majesty commanded the making of a temple in Nubia by cutting in the mountain. Never was the like done before except by the son of Amun". The son of Amun was Rameses himself. The job was, of course done by thousands of human hands. It is impossible to guess how long it took to do. The facade of the Great Temple is 108 feet high. Each of the statues of Rameses is over 65 feet tall. The facade of the temple is 124 feet wide and its fourteen rooms reach back more than 200 feet into the mountain from which it was carved. The temple was so artfully engineered that twice each year, in September and March, the sun's rays illuminate the four gods in the rear. The first in which the inner sanctuary is fully lighted was recently deduced to occur on the anniversary of the King's Jubilee. Abu Simbel was a special case for more than one reason. It is not only the most outstanding of the Nubian temples, but also because of its enormous size and the fact that it is carved from one piece of solid rock it is the most difficult to preserve. Under the leadership of UNESCO, the world was warned of the danger to the Nubian temples as early as 1959. Governments and individuals contributed millions of dollars and informed ideas began to pour in. It was obvious from the first that the greatest amount of money was going to have to be spent on Abu Simbel and it was on Abu Simbel, accordingly, that the greatest amount of thought was focussed. The first plan to be proposed - in 1961 - called for the construction of an enormous cofferdam that would encircle the entire site. This idea, researched by French engineers, had the great advantage of leaving the temples undisturbed. The initial cost was prohibitive, however -- above 60 million dollars -- to say nothing of the maintenance expense of nearly 400 thousand a year.

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The next serious scheme, in 1962, was an Italian one. Giant hydraulic jacks would lift the temples 200 feet in the air where they would remain supported by columns of reinforced concrete. This was a conception bold enough to have appealed to Rameses himself. It was abandoned, however, on the basis of cost, 80 million dollars, that is to say the total of all the funds UNESCO had raised for the whole Nubian campaign would have had to be spent on Abu Simbel alone.

Another idea was to raise both temples by means of giant pontoons; but the idea that was finally accepted was a Swedish one - proposed in 1963. This changes Abu Simbel from what it was - a rock-cut temple - into two temples dissected and rebuilt block by block. Before the dissection could be begun several preliminary measures had to be taken.

The mountain above has been cleared away. Three hundred thousand tons of it. Leaving a thickness of one and a half feet of the original rock as walls and ceiling. That's the dark grey strip here. During all this work the entire structure was supported from underneath by steel beams. The black strip on top shows the line of concrete reinforcement that will be applied when the blocks of the temple are reassembled at the new site.

Once the inner chambers had been reinforced and the overburden of rock removed, the job of cutting and moving the temples themselves could proceed. This project will move the temples 200 feet above and 200 yards behind the location they previously occupied. The two temples will face exactly as they were before so that the sun, during two months of the year, will still shine into the innermost chambers. The cliffs, from which the two temples were carved, will be reconstructed so as to restore to Abu Simbel the location that it has enjoyed for 3,300 years.

WORK AT COFFERDAM

NARRATOR V.O.:

The 36 million dollar rescue effort at Abu Simbel didn't get started until 1964. By then, extraordinary measures had to be taken because in May of that year the Aswan High Dam was partially closed, and the upper waters of the Nile began slowly to rise.

(NOISE IN BACKGROUND - AT DAM SITE)

BOAT AND COFFERDAM

NARRATOR V.O.:

It became necessary to build a temporary cofferdam 75 feet higher than the old level of the Nile. This temporary barrier would itself be underwater by January 1967, but well before then the entire job of removal would have to be finished.

MEN WORKING

By autumn 1964, the work at Abu Simbel was threatened by a natural drama. The Nile flood was lasting longer and rising higher than usual, and the international crew of the joint venture had to work day and night to build the cofferdam in time.

MS ENTRY TUBE

A steel tube was built to provide an entrance to the Great Temple when later the entire facade would be covered with tons of sand.

INTERIOR SCAFFOLDING

The interiors of both temples were braced with steel scaffolding to withstand the strain once the mountain of rock above was stripped away, and to hold the temples while they were being cut apart.

(BACKGROUND NOISE)

LS PAN TO TOP OF FACADE

Before the rock above and behind the facade could be removed the towering statues in front of Abu Simbel had to be covered with sand.

STILLS SEQUENCE

(BACKGROUND NOISE)

LS ZOOM TO FACADE COVERED

When Jacob Burckhardt found Abu Simbel in 1813 it was not so completely covered as this.

WORK BEHIND FACADE

In 1965 three hundred thousand tons of rock were cut

WORK BEHIND FACADE
(CONTD.)

away behind the facade and above the ceiling of the
Great Temple.

NUMBER ON STONE

Each block of stone to be removed was given an
identification number.

SAWING

It was all soft stone and it had to be treated so
that edges and corners wouldn't break or chip.

ISKANDER

Dr. Iskander of the UAR Department of Antiquities...

ISKANDER ON CAMERA

SYNCH:

Iskander: The contractor has included lots of
foreign nations. For example - the German
people - Swedish people - French people - Italian
people and Egyptian, and these are the main but
there may be other nationalities. And they are
all living now here and co-operating in the
work - pulling together, and this affords a good
example of the great co-operation between all
nations to continue and execute a very important
project.

(FOREIGN VOICES - BACKGROUND NOISE)

LUCANO

NARRATOR V.O.:

Summer, 1965. Engineer Lucano, an Italian, was in
charge of the delicate job of cutting through the
remaining rock of the ceilings and walls.

SYNCH:

Lucano: The first room of big temple, room
number one it's called, and famous for big
colossus - this big colossus sculptured of
natural rock. Now here we are working - cutting
or let's say chiselling small slots in the ceiling
in order to prepare the final cutting. In fact,
as you know, we have to cut some blocks of 80
centimetres of thickness, and for the room
we must prepare a small cut from this side, you
know there are two kinds again when we start to
rip out for the final cut. Dividing the pieces
of blocks - the blocks will probably be 20 tons
more or less. It's not a question of the difficulty .
the work, all the work is done - the difficulty is

LUCANO ON CAMERA (CONTD.)

deriving only from the fact that we have to do quite a delicate work - we are working like - I don't know how to say the English name - like the people that is working on some watches, and the people must work very carefully and ... we cannot damage anything here.

MS WORKER WITH CLOTH

NARRATOR V.O.:

Many of the carved walls were covered with layers of cloth and plastic for protection.

(RIVETERS IN BACKGROUND)

TWO MEN SHOUTING

The international staff at Abu Simbel had to improvise their accustomed ways of life. Engineer Kramer, Swede:

KRAMER ON CAMERA

SYNCH:

Kramer: ... not go there. My wife tried to teach our boy and also our girl, but it's difficult.

MONTAGE, SHOWING HOME LIFE, SHOPPING, SCHOOLING, IN VARIOUS LANGUAGES

SYNCH: SOUND IN VARIOUS LANGUAGES, INTERVIEW WITH BACHELOR, ETC.

STONE SWINGING IN AIR

NARRATOR V.O.:

Summer of 1965. The first 30-ton piece of facade of the Great Temple was swinging away to safety.

FACE STILL SEQUENCE

By the spring of 1966 it was finally time for the huge images of Rameses II to go.

MUSIC

STILL SEQUENCE HILL TOP

All of Abu Simbel, cut apart and reduced to huge blocks, was stored at the top of the rock, near where the temples were to be put together again, even in scattered pieces Abu Simbel retained its dignity and beauty ...

MUSIC

STILL SEQUENCE HILL TOP
(CONTD.)
MAHEU

MAHEU V.O.:

Everywhere I go the government and the ...

NARRATOR V.O.:

Rene Maheu is Director General of UNESCO ...

SYNCH:

Maheu: heads ... whom I meet, the first thing they talk to me in the developing countries is their cultural monuments, their cultural wealth, and they want UNESCO to help, and they tell me, well, you have done so much so well in Nubia that surely now with your magic wand, you certainly can help with our problems. I would give you several examples. Mexico, of course, has so much to preserve. Peru, with the old Inca cities, I was there three months ago in Pakistan, and the first thing that the President of the Republic mentioned to me, it was not education, it was not science, it was not development, it was not technology, it was Mohan Sodaruh ... it was the preservation of an old city which dates back to 2,000 years BC, and which has nothing to do with present Pakistan, and he said: "We want to protect this (not for us - it happens to be in our territory, but we didn't build it, and in a sense it doesn't belong to us, except that it is legally within our territory) but it belongs to mankind and we feel that we must protect it for mankind." Now, all over the world, you have this problem, and what is so interesting and encouraging is that gradually the concept of a trusteeship is being developed; and therefore we may establish a new concept that there are some sacred places in the world which belong to all of us, and which all of us must preserve and to which all of us must have access.

(MUSIC)

CLOSING SCENE

NARRATOR V.O.:

When next one visits Abu Simbel, the Great Temple will again look like this. If nature and mankind allow, Abu Simbel may remain another 3,300 years ...

(MUSIC)

CLOSING CREDITS