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A Granite Statue Base of Ḥr-ỉr-ʿȝ (Cairo N 9107)

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General Description

Registration Numbers: M 7273; N 9107
Dimensions: Length: 65 cm; Width: 35 cm; Height: 15 cm.

The base is rather well preserved. The statue which once stood upon it was removed out badly, causing some damage in the upper surface of the base. A hieroglyphic inscription is engraved around the base and on its upper surface, written between two framing lines, a feature well known for the sculpture of the 26th Dynasty. The style of the hieroglyphic signs and their shape are clear and delicate, as it is the case on most statues of the period.

A granite statue base of Ḥr-ỉr-ʿȝ (Cairo N 9107)
The Inscriptions

Upper Surface of the Base

Two horizontal lines, beginning from the right, occupy the surface of the base just in front of the removed statue. Most of the first line had been scratched off as a result of the process of removing the statue.

→

\[\text{imȝh(w) hr nswt bity Nfr-ỉb-Rʿ} \[\text{[s: Rʿ Psmtk]} \]
\[\text{a ‘nh mi Rʿ} \]
\[\text{imy-r} \text{ruyt} \]
\[\text{b Hr-ỉr-ʿȝ} \]
\[\text{c rn.f nfr Nfr-ỉb-Rʿ-nfr} \]
\[\text{d nb imȝh} \]

The honoured by the king of Upper and Lower Egypt Nfr-ỉb-Rʿ [the son of Re, Psammetichus] may he live like Re.
The overseer of the ruyt-administration Hor-ir-aa, whose beautiful name is Nfr-ỉb-Rʿ-nfr, owner of honour.

a. The \[\text{s: Rʿ} \] name of the king Psmtk\[2\] has to be restored in this defaced area.
b. The word ruyt appears at the end of Old Kingdom, as a new version for the old ‘rryt,\[3\] this term was connected with the official’s titles but it has no clear and defined meaning. imy-r ruyt could have the meaning of “ overseer of the approach to a building/approach area to temple precinct”, and more likely “ overseer of the gateway/entrance”.\[4\] K. Piehl in his article on another monument of Hr-ỉr-ʿȝ translated this term as “ the overseer of the warehouse”.\[5\] K. Jansen-Winkeln in his comment on this title\[6\] refers to its connection with the police and judicial administration. The title was carried by some of the senior officials of the Late Period;\[7\] it can be translated here as “ the overseer of the administration”, since the royal tutor has to be chosen among the administrative officials, who are well qualified to train the royal princes.\[8\]


\[5\] K. Piehl, loc. cit.


\[7\] For a list of these officials, see R. el-Sayed, BIFAO 74, 1974, p. 34 (6).

\[8\] C.H. Roehrig, The Eighteenth Dynasty Titles Royal Nurse (mnʿ nswt), Royal Tutor (mnʿ nswt), and Foster Brother/Sister of the Lord of the Two Lands (smmnʿ mnʿ nb ṭwy), UMI Dissertation Services, 1990, p. 25-33.
c. Commonly used masculine name during the Late Period.9

d. *Hor-ir-aa* was contemporary with three kings of the 26th dynasty, *Necho II* [𓏏𓊉𓏏𓊉𓏏𓊉], *Psammetichus II* [𓏐𓏏𓏏𓏏𓏏], and *Apries* [𓏏𓏏𓏏𓏏𓏏]. According to H. De Meulenaere,10 his “beautiful name” might have been *Wḥm-ỉb-Rʿ-nfr* under the reign of *Necho II*; he changed it for *Nfr-ỉb-Rʿ-nfr* under *Psammetichus II*, but, during the reign of *Apries*, he used only his main name without mentioning his *rn nfr*.11

Front of the Base

The text goes from right to left in two horizontal lines:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ỉry-𝑝ʾ} & \text{ḥtȝty-ʾ} \text{ḥtmt} \text{ḥty smr wʾ ty ny mrwt ỉty nswt} \\
\text{ʾnhwy} & \text{ḥty ᵇ nḏrỉ Mȝʿt f mr(y) nb.f ỉr r ntt} \text{ m ib.f ᵇmy-rȝ rwyt Ḥr-ỉr-ʿȝ}
\end{align*}
\]

Hereditary prince and governor, treasurer of the king of Lower Egypt, the sole and beloved companion, the eyes of the king of Upper Egypt and the ears of the king of Lower Egypt, the one who holds Maat, the beloved one of his lord, who acts according to his desire, the overseer of the *rwyt*-administration, *Hor-ir-aa*.

e. For other examples dating from the New Kingdom, see R. el-Sayed, “À propos de la statue de Pasar CG 630 au musée du Caire”, *BIFAO* 80, 1980, p. 227 (l); dating from the Late Period, see U. Rössler-Köhler, *Individuelle Haltungen zum ägyptischen Königtum der Spätzeit*, *GOF* 21, 1991, p. 16-17, p. 45 (B3.2).

f. This epithet refers, in my opinion, to the role played by the official during the offering of *Mȝʿt* by the king in temples, probably responsible for carrying the divine figure of the goddess *Mȝʿt*. There are only eight cases known till now for non-royal individuals who hold and present a figure of the goddess *Mȝʿt* in ancient Egyptian art.12
Right Side of the Base

The text is continued facing the right side, but the signs here are taller and slender:

→

\[\text{w̓d hmn.f rdỉt tẃt₮ nw ḏtyw₮ hwwt ḏtyw nbw śms(w) twt nw nsw mn mr(w)tm hr r nb.ỉ mr(y) wnn.i m ñy-rd(w)(y) hmn.f m bw nb m₮-zte(t)-n₁mr.f wi rnm(w)₁}\]

His Majesty ordered to erect the statues of the everlasting of all temples, following the king’s statues, in order to be not far from my beloved master. I was His Majesty’s companion in every place because he loves me, the tutor.

g. twt: this is the archaic word for the statue of a god, a king, or an official, made of any material.¹³ From the New Kingdom onwards, it could also refer to a block statue¹⁴ or a cult statue of the king.¹⁵ In the New Kingdom this term together with ḏtyw, ṭst(n), or snn is used to designate the naophorus statues.¹⁶

h. ḏtyw: nisbe-adjective from ḏt, meaning “eternity”,¹⁸ so ḏtyw are those of eternity (the everlasting), or those of Osiris, it is used here to describe a certain type of temple statues; according to the text they will be placed behind the king’s statues. This term (ḏtyw) is mentioned only once in Pyramid Texts: ḏtyw ṭm m.”¹⁹

i. m₮-zte(t)-n²: compound preposition more rarely used than n₮-zte(t)-n²; it has the meaning of “in as much as”, “because”, and is often used in connection with the verb mr.²²

j. The verb ṭnn means “to nurse the young god (or king)²² and is usually written with the determinative which represents a sitting woman holding a child (釐). Here the word is a title as it appears on other monuments of Ḥr-ỉr-ʿȝ²² as ṭnn nb ṭywy or with different parallel words such as ṭdi nsrw, mn’ bity; these three titles refer to the function of tutor of the royal child.²⁴

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¹³ P. Wilson, OLA 78, 1997, p. 1132.
¹⁶ Wb. III, 385, 3-10; P. Wilson, OLA 78, 1997, p. 773.
¹⁷ P. Wilson, OLA 78, 1997, p. 865.
²⁰ PT 475, § 950 b, about the king “at the head of the eternal ones”(?), see R.O. Faulkner, The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts, Oxford, 1969, p. 163, n. 4.
**Left Side of the Base**

When the king himself saw these statues in front of them, as a holy image, he ordered to pour water before the Majesty of the Horus Menekh-ib, as much as he rewarded me in my place (= my office) more than anyone. Earlier, His Majesty appointed me as a chief who commands those who were witnesses, while coming after giving the road to the people (= direct them through the ceremony).

k. hr.sn: I think the suffix pronoun refers to the gods' statues or royal figures erected in the temple, where our base had once been.

l. sšm: form or figure, it refers in general to the god's image.  

m. Horus name of Psammetichus II.

n. Only the left part of the sign ḥs is still preserved. We may also note that the writing of the dependant pronoun  represents the Old Egyptian writing of this pronoun.

o. Graphic transposition between the signs and for aesthetic reasons.

p. m dwȝt: adverb of time meaning “early” or “in the morning”, the damaged part was probably occupied by the determinative. It is noticeable, that during the Late Period it is common to replace some signs by others, especially by.

q. rdi m hr n: an expression found since the Middle Egyptian, with the meaning of “to command someone”.

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25 Wb. IV, 290, 14.  
26 E. Edel, *Ältere Grammatik*, §166.  
29 Wb. II, 468, 4.
Back Side of the Base

[FIG. 9-10]

hm.f lḥt-hr.sn swswkh.f hr bȝ n bȝkh
m swwhr nwpw.f ḏt nhh m nswt bty

His Majesty <stood> before them (=the royal statues) and glorified his kȝw, near the bȝ of the humble, lengthening his years for ever, as king of Upper and Lower Egypt.

r. swswkh.f: the verb swsw means “to adore/worship by using a praise formula”. It usually has a determinative in the form of a standing person in a gesture of adoration (A 30). It is always connected with other words expressing worship such as “dwȝ”, which is not mentioned in this text. I believe that the king starts to glorify his own statues so that the statue of Ḥr-ỉr-ʿȝ, which is placed nearby, will also benefit from the favour of the god.

s. hr bȝ n bȝkh: as the bȝ is “the personification of vital forces… of the deceased”, it can be considered that the ceremony performed before the statue of Ḥr-ỉr-ʿȝ will help his bȝ “to come into existence”. The preposition means here “near”. The official wants to focus on the existence of his statue and secondly he lays stress on the great benefit he will get as a result of its excellent position.

t. swwhr nwpw: The expression is well known, meaning “to make prosperous years”. The regular writing of the verb since Middle Kingdom is , with the meaning of “to endure”, “to lengthen”.

To sum up our comments, we can notice that the text mostly relies on Old and Middle Egyptian in writing as well as orthography, that the determinatives in most cases are omitted, that signs are replaced by others. All these features are characteristic of the Egyptian writing in the Late Period, more specially of the archaism, which prevailed in art, writing and language in the time of the Kushite and Saite Dynasties.
Provenance

The provenance of the base is questionable, one could assume that it comes from one of the numerous sanctuaries where Twenty-Sixth Dynasty material was found, for example Saïs, the dynastic chief city, or Memphis where Ḥr-ỉr-ʿȝ has already left some monuments.39

K. Jansen-Winkeln40 registered the discovered monuments of Ḥr-ỉr-ʿȝ; we can add a monument published by O. Perdu, leading to the following list:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objects</th>
<th>Provenance</th>
<th>Bibliography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Lower part of a naophorus</td>
<td>Sæqqāra</td>
<td>R. el-Sayed, <em>Documents relatifs à Saïs et ses divinités, BdE 69</em>, 1969, p. 93-108, pl. XII- XIII.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Offering table</td>
<td>Sæqqāra</td>
<td><em>PM III</em> 2, 1979, p. 588.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Canopic Jars</td>
<td>Sæqqāra</td>
<td><em>PM III</em> 2, 1979, p. 588.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Wooden coffin</td>
<td>Sæqqāra</td>
<td><em>PM III</em> 2, 1979, p. 588.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Tomb</td>
<td>Sæqqāra</td>
<td><em>PM III</em> 2, 1979, p. 588.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the above table, Ḥr-ỉr-ʿȝ has seven statues discovered at various sites. Two of them represent the owner presenting a naos, one shows Ḥr-ỉr-ʿȝ standing, another one kneeling with a space before his feet for the inscriptions like the base under consideration. Four of the six statues were certainly discovered in temples.

This statue quite certainly dates back to the reign of King Psammetichus II. As for the type of the statue, which once stood upon this base, one can conclude that, it is most probably a kneeling statue of Ḥr-ỉr-ʿȝ, holding a divine symbol or bearing a naos with a god or a goddess figure, like Cairo CG 807 and Cairo CG 658 belonging to the same owner. According to the text inscribed on the base, it has been erected in a temple together with statues of King Psammetichus II. The text also explains how Horiraa, as a royal tutor, was respected and loved by this king.


42 About the naophoros statue, which can be traced back to the second half of 18th Dynasty and is widely represented throughout the Late Period, see J. Vandier, Manuel d’archéologie égyptienne III, Paris, 1952, p. 460-470; J.A. Josephson, M.M. Eldamaty, op. cit., pls. 4, 21, 33, 36, 47, 49; B.V. Bothmer, ESLP, 1960, figs. 6-7, 57-59, 83, 87, 98-99, 100, 106-108, 123, 134, 139, 155; B.V. Bothmer, “Apotheosis in Late Egyptian sculpture”, in M.E. Cody (ed), Egyptian Art. Selected Writings of Bernard V. Bothmer, New York, 2004, figs. 16.6, 16.27, 16.29.
A Granite Statue Base of Ḥr-ỉr-ʿȝ (Cairo N 9107)

**FIG. 1.** Cairo N 9107; upper surface of the base.

**FIG. 2.** Facsimile.
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A Granodiorite Statue Base of Ḥr-ỉr-ʿȝ (Cairo N 9107)

FIG. 3. Cairo N 9107; front of the base.

FIG. 4. Facsimile.

FIG. 5. Cairo N 9107; right side of the base.

FIG. 6. Facsimile.
FIG. 7. Cairo N 9107; left side of the base.

FIG. 8. Facsimile.

FIG. 9. Cairo N 9107; back side of the base.

FIG. 10. Facsimile.