MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉDUCATION NATIONALE, DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR ET DE LA RECHERCHE

BULLETIN
DE L'INSTITUT FRANÇAIS
D'ARCHÉOLOGIE ORIENTALE

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BIFAO 112 (2013), p. 371-380

Noha Shalaby

A Headless Block Statuette of the XXVIth Dynasty (CGC 941).

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A Headless Block Statuette of the XXVIth Dynasty (CGC 941)

NOHA SHALABY

This article deals with the inscribed block statuette CGC 941 kept in the basement of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.[1] No precise provenance is mentioned in the registers (SR 573), however the statuette belongs to a priest called Pastjenef who presumably lived in Thebes as could be inferred from the citation of "Amun of Karnak" in his title *ḫm-nṯr Ỉmn m Ỉpt-swt*. He is most probably the same priest of Amun mentioned in Brooklyn Papyrus 47.218.3 who lived during the early part of the XXVIth dynasty. The statuette displays a rare XXVIth dynasty occurrence of the title *ḫry-sšꜣ n mnḫt špst nt ḥꜥw-nṯr*, which had been already attested in few examples from the XXIInd dynasty. In accordance with the hieroglyphic text, which is transcripted by Borchardt in his *Catalogue Général* (CGC 941),[2] some brief references to this statuette are found in egyptological literature.[3]

General Description [fig. i-iii]

The statuette is made of grey granite. It measures 30 cm in height, 18 cm in width, and 17 cm in depth. It depicts a man sitting with his arms crossed over the knees, which are drawn up to shoulder level. The statuette is not in a good state of preservation; head and feet are missing,

1 The statuette is registered under SS. 32A-W.4.

2 L. Borchardt, *Statuen und Statuetten von Königen und Privatleuten* III, *CGC nos. 1-1294*, Berlin, 1930, p. 166. The transcription lacks only a part of a sign 𓅱 (*infra*, n. e).

3 R.A. Parker, *A Saite Oracle Papyrus from Thebes in the Brooklyn Museum [Papyrus Brooklyn 47.218.3]*, Rhode Island, 1962, p. 25; K. Jansen-Winkeln, *Ägyptische Biographien der 22. und 23. Dynastie* 1. *Übersetzung und Kommentar*, *ÄAT* 8/1, 1985, p. 176; PM VIII/2, 1999, p. 844 (801-755-100); K. Jansen-Winkeln, "Zum Verständnis der 'Saitischen Formel'", *SAK* 28, 2000, p. 111.

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left leg and base are partly damaged. Much of the surface is slightly eroded, especially at the front. However, none had affected the clarity of the back and the preserved front inscriptions, which are perfectly shown.

Unlike the usual type of block statues, in which the subject is entirely wrapped in a cloak as a formless mass, the statuette CGC 941 reflects a natural appearance of the body. It shows the figure with the upper part of the body exposed wearing a long, tight and smooth skirt, which, in profile, transparently reveals the shape of the legs and nearly reaches to the ankles. The limbs are free from the cubic structure with bare arms freely modeled three-quarters in the round and feet were left uncovered. Bothmer commented on this type of block statues since the appearance of its prototype in the Middle Kingdom[4] until the beginning of the Ist century BC. He quoted that it was frequent in the XXVth and early XXVIth dynasties, and added that it was abandoned by the end of Psamtik I's reign to be revived in the IVth century BC.[5] However, Perdu noted recently that examples of this type were attested in the XXVIth dynasty after Psamtik I until the reign of Apries.[6]

Pastjenef was most probably wearing a simple shoulder-length plain wide bag wig, the bottom of which is apparent above the rectangular back pillar. A close view to the top of the latter shows that it extends very slightly beyond the wig surface level, a feature assigned to sculptures of the XXVth and the beginning of XXVIth dynasties.[7]

The right arm crosses over the left. The left hand lies open with palm down while the clenched right one holds a folded kerchief. Block statues holding kerchief are well known since the New Kingdom till the beginning of the XXVIth dynasty as it was noted recently by Perdu.[8] But, as Bothmer had stated, the type of CGC 941—torso, arms and feet bare while legs transparently covered—grasping the kerchief are only attested under Psamtik I.[9] In fact, the examples gathered by Perdu[10] attributed to the XXVth dynasty showed only one exact parallel of the type under discussion: the statuette JE 36993 dated by Bothmer to the XXVth dynasty,[11] and in a more recent study to the XXVIth dynasty (reign of Psamtik I).[12]

The short garment is secured at the waist by a band or belt surmounted by a motif. The latter consists of very small vertical adjacent loop shapes. This pattern, found on a number of seated and standing figures, either above the waistband of a skirt or upon the chest area forming the edges of a mantle wrapped around the body, is unusual for a garment on a block statue. It made its debut in the Middle Kingdom and continued to be employed in the costumes on sculptures

4 For examples of the prototype dating to the Middle Kingdom, see B. Fay, "Padihor's Block Statue", *BES* 17, 2007, p. 68, n. 11.

5 B.V. Bothmer, *Egyptian Sculpture of the Late Period*, Brooklyn, 1960, p. 37-38, 95-96 (no. 76); *id.*, "The Block Statue of Ankh-Khonsu in Boston and Cairo", *Festschrift für Labib Habachi*, *MDAIK* 37, 1981, p. 81; *id.*, "Block Statues of Dynasty XXV", in C. Berger *et al.* (ed.), *Hommages à Jean Leclant* II, *BdE* 106/2, 1993, p. 61-68, in which the author established a typology for the XXVth dynasty block statues that can be used for all periods.

6 O. Perdu, *Les statues privées de la fin de l'Égypte pharaonique (1069 av. J.-C. - 395 apr. J.-C.)* I. *Hommes*, Paris, 2012, p. 78.

7 B.V. Bothmer, *ESLP*, p. 5.

8 See O. Perdu, *op. cit.*, p. 100, 102, n. 16-21.

9 B.V. Bothmer, *ESLP*, p. 39.

10 O. Perdu, *op. cit.*, p. 102, n. 17.

11 B.V. Bothmer, in C. Berger *et al.* (ed.), *Hommages à Jean Leclant* II, p. 67.

12 J.A. Josephson, M.M. Eldamaty, *Statues of the XXVth and XXVIth Dynasties*, *CGC nos. 48601- 48649*, Cairo, 1999, p. 58-59, pl. 25.

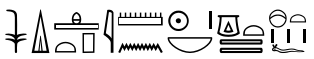
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from the New Kingdom, the Third Intermediate Period down to the XXVIth dynasty.[13] In fact, the figure would appear to be a nude sculpture if it were not for the belt with the clear motif visible from the sides and the back, and the bottom edge of the skirt that is evident in the right side. Finally, Pastjenef is seated on a very low round cushion, which was particularly recurrent at the end of the XXVth and the beginning of the XXVIth dynasty.[14]

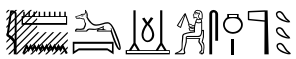
Texts

The front of the skirt bears five neatly framed lines of hieroglyphic inscriptions, of which the beginning of last three are partly damaged. The back pillar is carved with two columns of inscriptions.

A. *Upon the skirt at the front* [FIG. II & IV a]

[1] 

[2] 

[3] 

[4] 

[5] 

[1] *ḥtp-dỉ-nswt Ỉmn-Rˁ nb ns(w)t tɜwy psḏt.f*[a]
[2] *dỉ.f pr nb*[b] *ḥr wḏḥw.f n rˁ nb n kɜ n ḥm-nṯr*
[3] *Ỉmn ḥry-sšṯɜ*[c] *(n) mnḫt špst nt ḥˁw-nṯr*[d]
[4] *[…Ỉmn/Ỉmn-Rˁ? ḏsr-st*[e] *P(ɜ).s-ṯnf*[f]
[5] *[… Ḥr-sɜ-ɜst*[g]

[1] *A boon which the king gives (to) Amun-Re, lord of the thrones of the two lands and (to) his Ennead,* [2] *that he may give all what appear upon his offering table of every day to the ka of the prophet of* [3] *Amun, the chief of the secrets of the august clothing of the divine image* [4] *[… Amun/Amun-Re?] Sacred of Place, Pastjenef* [5] *[… Hor]siese.*

13 For examples of the motif under discussion, see B. HORNEMANN, *Types of Ancient Egyptian Statuary*, Copenhagen, 1951-1969, I, p. 170; II, p. 396; IV, p. 1001 (for the Middle Kingdom); *Types* I, p. 178; II, p. 354; III, p. 590 (for the New Kingdom); *Types* III, p. 746 (for the Third Intermediate Period). A parallel to this motif from the XXVIth dynasty can be shown through the statue Berlin 17271, which represents a man seated on a chair with a low back in which the motif is clearly shown on the edges of the mantle upon the chest area, see B. HORNEMANN, *Types* III, p. 764.

14 B.V. BOTHMER, *ESLP*, p. 36. For examples of block statues with cushion (low or high), see R. SCHULZ, *Die Entwicklung und bedeutung des Kuboiden Statuentypus*, *HÄB* 33-34, 1992, cat. nos. 2-3, 26, 31, 75, 82, 86, 96, 99, 105, 142, 146, 153, 155, 158, 197-198, 200 and 242 (for the New Kingdom); H. BRANDL, *Untersuchungen zur steinernen Privatplastik der Dritten Zwischenzeit. Typologie. Ikonographie. Stilistik* II, Berlin, 2008, pl. 38-39, 46 and 141 (for the Third Intermediate Period).

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Comments

a. Amun of Karnak presided over the great and small Enneads, for further details, see P. Barguet, *Le temple d'Amon-Rê à Karnak*, *RAPH* 21, 1962, p. 22-23; H. Te Velde, "Relations and Conflicts between Egyptian Gods, particularly in the Divine Ennead of Heliopolis", in H. G. Kippenberg (*ed.*), *Struggles of Gods. Papers of the Groningen Work Group for the Study of the History of Religions*, Berlin, 1984, p. 243.

b.  should be corrected as . For examples of the sequence *pr nb ḥr wḏḥw*, see R. El-Sayed, "Deux statues inédites du musée du Caire", *BIFAO* 84, 1984, p. 134; *id.*, "Quelques compléments sur la statue JE 37335 du musée du Caire", *MDAIK* 40, 1984, p. 256; K. Jansen-Winkeln, *Biographische und religiose Inschriften der Spätzeit aus dem ägyptischen Museum Kairo 2. Texte und Tafeln*, *ÄAT* 45, 2001, p. 370, no. 34 (a,1); H. Selim, "Three Unpublished Late Period Statues", *SAK* 32, 2004, p. 363.

c. On the title *ḥry-sšꜣ* until the end of the New Kingdom, see S.Z. Balanda, "The Title *ḥry-sšꜣ* to the End of the New Kingdom", *JARCE* 45, 2009, p. 319-348.

d. Apart from the statuette CGC 941, the title *ḥry-sšꜣ (n) mnḫt špst nt ḥʿw-nṯr* is encountered on few examples dating to the XXIInd dynasty, see K. Jansen-Winkeln, *Ägyptische Biographien der 22. und 23. Dynastie*, p. 175-176. For other priestly titles related to clothes such as *ḫm-nṯr mnḫt* and *wʿb mnḫt*, cf. R. El-Sayed, "Au sujet de la statue Caire CG. 662", *BIFAO* 77, 1977, p. 106; W.A. Ward, "The Date of the Reused False Door of *Nfrtm-m-sꜣ·f* at Saqqâra", *JEA* 70, 1984, p. 89. For *ḥʿw-nṯr* translated as "image of the god" when clothing is involved, see R. El-Sayed, "À propos de la statue de Pasar CG. 630 au musée du Caire", *BIFAO* 80, 1980, p. 216 (w).

e. The partly preserved sign *ḏsr* was omitted in Borchardt's transcription. For *ḏsr-st*, see *Wb* V, p. 612-613; Chr. Leitz, *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichungen* VII, *OLA* 116, 2003, p. 659 (c)-660 (a). *Imn-Rʿ ḏsr-st* is mentioned in the small XVIIIth dynasty temple at Medinet Habu as its principal god, and it is very likely that its inclusion in the text is associated with the Decade Festival, see G. Daressy, *Notice explicative des ruines de Médinet Habou*, Cairo, 1897, p. 13, 17; U. Hölscher, *The Excavations of Medinet Habu* II. *The Temples of the Eighteenth Dynasty*, Chicago, 1939, p. 44; M. Doresse, "Le dieu voilé dans sa châsse et la fête du début de la Décade", *RdE* 31, 1979, p.64, n. 155; Cl. Traunecker, Fr. Le Saout, O. Masson, *La chapelle d'Achôris à Karnak* II, *CFEETK. Recherche sur les grandes civilisations: Synthèse* 5, Paris, 1981, p. 130-131, 133.

f. The name *Pꜣ.s-ṯnf* is a variant of *Pꜣ-ṯnf* (or its complete form *Pꜣ-(n-)ṯnf*) attested from the XXIInd dynasty onwards, *PN* I, p. 121, no. 14, p. 128, no. 20; II, p. 357. For the sign  used in this name (with an added diacritical tick) repeated on the left column of the back pillar, see D. Meeks, *Les architraves du temple d'Esna. Paléographie, Palhier* 1, 2004, p. 200 (§ 546).

g. The suggestion of *[Ḥr]-sꜣ-ꜣst* (*PN* I, p. 250, no. 13) as father of *Pꜣ.s-ṯnf* is that of R.A. Parker (*A Saite Oracle Papyrus,* p. 25).

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B. ***Texts on the back pillar*** [FIG. III & IV b]



[1] *nṯr-nỉwty*[a] *n ḥm-nṯr Ỉmn m Ỉpt-swt ḥry-sšt3 (n) mnḫt špst nt ḥʿw-nṯr ỉmy-st-*
[2] *(nt-)ʿ*[b] *n p3 ḥtp ʿ3 wʿb (n) pr Ỉmn*[c] *ḥr s3 3-nw P3.s-ṯnf dỉ.tw ḥ3(.f) ḫft k3.f m-b3ḥ.f Ỉwny-pw*

[1] *(O) the local god of the prophet of Amun at Karnak, chief of the secrets of the august clothing of the divine image, the imy-st-* [2] *(nt-)ʿ (functionary in charge) of the great and pure offering table of the temple of Amun at the 3rd phyle, Pastjenef, place (yourself) behind (him), at the time that his ka is before him, it is a Heliopolitan!*

Comments

a. The Saite Formula *nṯr-nỉwty (n)* NN *dỉ.tw ḥ3(.f) ḫft k3.f m-b3ḥ.f Ỉwny-pw*, encountered almost exclusively on the back pillar of various types of statues, is a short text including a common appeal of the owner of the statuette to the local deity; on this formula, see K. Jansen-Winkeln, *SAK* 28, 2000, p. 83-124.

b. The *ỉmy-st-(nt-)ʿ*, translated as "acolyte, helper, or ritual assistant", is an official within the persons in charge of the routine temple administration integrated into the phyle system—with no grading or ranking, see J.K. Thomson, "A First Acolyte of Amun", *JEA* 84, 1998, p. 215-220. For this title, see R.A. Parker, *A Saite Oracle Papyrus,* p. 30; J. Quaegebeur, "Documents Concerning a Cult of Arsinoe Philadelphos at Memphis", *JNES* 30, 1971, p. 268-270.

c. On the title *ỉmy-st-(nt-)ʿ n p3 ḥtp ʿ3 wʿb n pr Ỉmn*, which started to be held by the priests of Thebes in the Third Intermediate Period and continued to be used up to the Ptolemaic Period, see J. Quaegebeur, "La table d'offrandes grande et pure d'Amon", *RdE* 45, 1994, p. 155-173.

General Commentary

The statuette owner Pastjenef, son of Horsiese, served as a priest of Amun in the 3rd phyle at Karnak where he was in charge of the costumes used to envelop the statue of Amun-Re during the daily rituals. He was also responsible for the great and pure offering table.

The statuette CGC 941 had been merely dated through the texts by Jansen-Winkeln to the XXVIth dynasty.[15] However, Bothmer's general iconographical remark as regards the kerchief (*supra*) had presented a more precise dating criterion. Accordingly, the statuette is most probably dated to the reign of Psamtik I, which corresponds with the date of the procession stated in the Brooklyn Papyrus 47.218.3.

15 K. JANSEN-WINKELN, *SAK* 28, 2000, p. 111 (59).

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Though at a casual glance this fragmentary example would seem very common among the sculptures of the Late Period, it is a significant piece of Saite art since it displays three points of particular interest. The first is the title (*ḫry-sšṯȝ (n) mnḫt špst nt ḥʿw-nṯr*) inscribed twice on the statuette for being rarely encountered in general, and being unusual on the sculptures of the XXVIth dynasty in particular. The second is (*ḏsr-st*), which undoubtedly refers to the small temple of Medinet Habu. This gives a possibility that the owner of this statuette could be among the personnel taking part in the Decade Festival, to which there was a rare reference from the XXVIth dynasty.[16] The third is the motif above the waistband employed in costumes on sculptures since the Middle Kingdom. However, it is a rare instance, on which this motif was shown on a block statue.

16 Cl. Traunecker *et al.*, *La chapelle d'Achôris à Karnak* II, p. 131; M. Doresse, *RdE* 31, 1979, p. 42.

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1a.



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1c.

FIG. 1a-c. Block Statuette (CGC 941).

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FIG. II. Front of the Block Statuette (CGC 941).

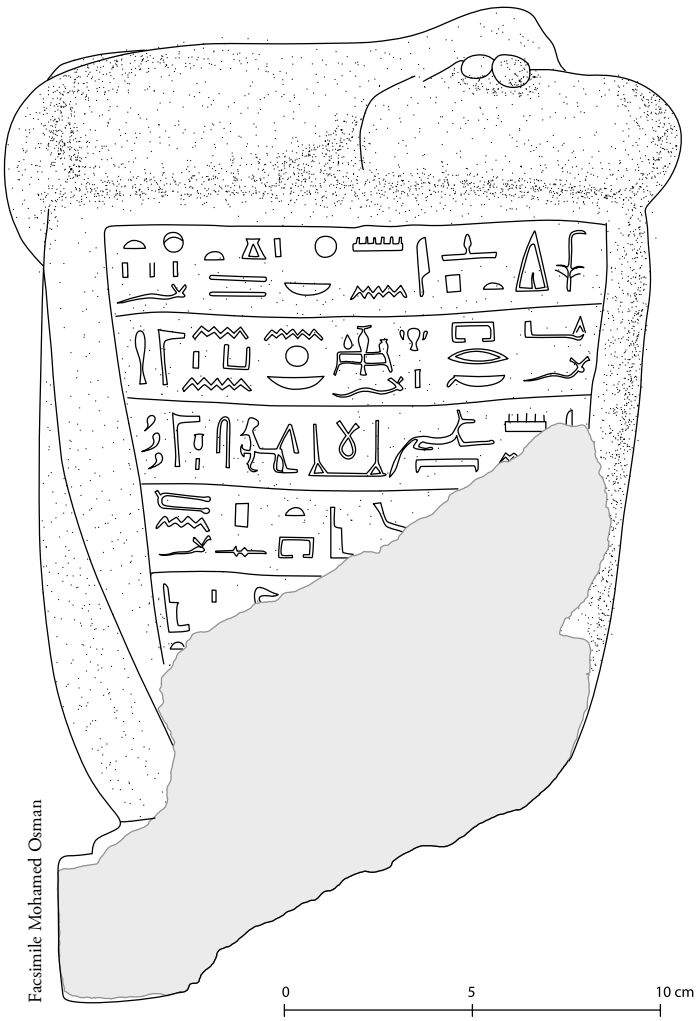
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FIG. III. Back of the Block Statuette (CGC 941).

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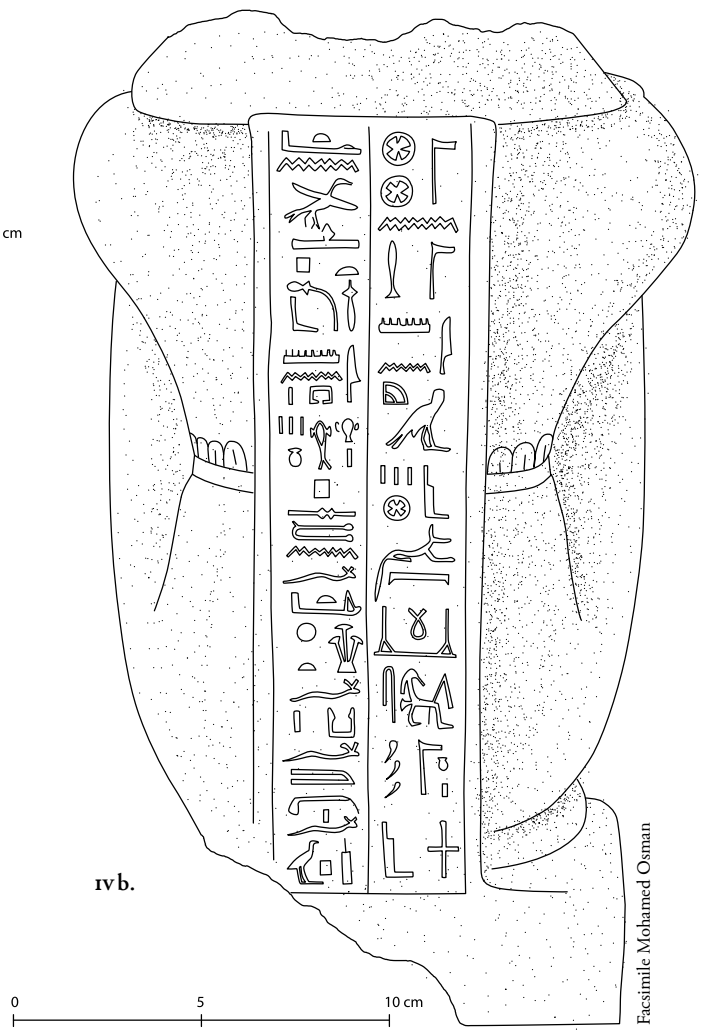


FIG. IV a-b. Block Statuette (CGC 941).

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