BIFAO 114 (2014), p. 447-454

Noha Shalaby

An Offering Table of a Prophet of Onuris from Abydos Cairo, Egyptian Museum JE 41438 (TR 23/1/15/7)

Conditions d’utilisation

L’utilisation du contenu de ce site est limitée à un usage personnel et non commercial. Toute autre utilisation du site et de son contenu est soumise à une autorisation préalable de l’éditeur (contact AT ifao.egnet.net). Le copyright est conservé par l’éditeur (Ifao).

Conditions of Use

You may use content in this website only for your personal, noncommercial use. Any further use of this website and its content is forbidden, unless you have obtained prior permission from the publisher (contact AT ifao.egnet.net). The copyright is retained by the publisher (Ifao).

Dernières publications

9782724707748 Abréviations des périodiques et collections en usage à l’Ifao, 7e éd. Bernard Mathieu
9782724707519 Annales islamologiques 52 Vivienne G. Callender
9782724707465 BIFAO 118 Hourig Sourouzian
9782724707311 El Hawawish
9782724707571 Catalogue de la statuaire royale de la XIXe dynastie
9782724707151 La vie quotidienne des moines II Olivier Delouis (éd.), Maria Mossakowska-Gaubert (éd.)
9782724706437 Guerre et paix dans le Proche-Orient médiéval (Xe-XVe siècle) Mathieu Eychenne (éd.), Stéphane Pradines (éd.), Abbès Zouache (éd.)
9782724707267 La vaisselle en pierre des reines de Pépy Ier Anne Minault-Gout

© Institut français d’archéologie orientale - Le Caire
This article studies an unpublished inscribed offering table displayed at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo (fig. 1-3). Carrying at present time the number TR 23/1/15/7, the origin of the offering table remained unknown for many decades due to the disappearance of its JE number. The latter is now confirmed to be the Abydene offering table JE 41438 discovered by John Garstang more than one century ago. The offering table belongs to Djedbastetioufankh who was a third prophet of Onuris, presumably in the temple of this god at Thinis. It most probably dates to the late 25th-early 26th Dynasty based mainly on some epigraphical and orthographical details. Although its text is quite common, containing the offering formula addressed to Osiris (left) and to Wepwawet (right) followed by the title and the name of the owner and that of his father Hor, it preserves one of few occurrences of the name Djedbastetioufankh from Abydos.

Origin

The Egyptian Museum Special Register (Nr. 11106) lacks the information as regards the provenance and date of discovery of TR 23/1/15/7, however, other details (i.e. dimensions, description, material, and owner’s name and title) are identical with those of the offering table...
JE 41438, which could not have been located in the museum. Fortunately, the archives of the Garstang Museum of Archaeology, University of Liverpool, keep photographs of the offering table JE 41438 confirming its identification with TR 23/1/15/7. The photographs (fig. 2, 4) were taken at the time of its discovery during Garstang’s excavations at Abydos in 1909, which covered a wide area in the North Cemetery as well as an eastern extension to the Middle Cemetery; however, the specific location of the discovery remains uncertain.

Description

It is a sandstone rectangular offering table taking the standard shape of the htp-sign, sculpted as one with a shaft to be sunk in the ground (fig. 5). It measures 59 cm in width, 61 cm in depth (including the small square protuberance measuring 11 cm), and 46 cm in height.

The large sign is carved on the offering table as a reed mat with a bread loaf. On each side over the htp-sign are two large bs-vases, from which water flows to the outside through the spout. The food offerings are arranged in three levels. The bottom shows six centered and decorated round loaves of bread. The middle displays a calf head, an animal’s heart, a pomegranate, meat chops, and a cucumber. The top level shows an animal’s leg.

The offering table is almost intact. However, it was in a better state of preservation upon discovery (fig. 2) with only a surface damage of the bottom right-hand corner, which should have included a round loaf of bread, part of the libation vase, part of the reed mat and end of the right proscyneme, as well as some slight scratches, which did not affect the clarity of the inscriptions. The present state (fig. 1) shows the surface being much eroded with both the top right-hand corner and the bottom left-hand corner lacking part of the inscriptions.

Texts

There are two proscynemes running along the borders of the offering table except for the base.

---

3 The possibility that TR 23/1/15/7 and JE 41438 could refer to the same offering table was already noted, cf. http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/gri/3cairo.pdf, p. 868 (V. 67A).
4 I express my gratitude to Dr. Steven Snape, Director of the Garstang Museum of Archaeology, for sending and authorizing the publication of the two photographs (respectively A. 400 and A. 398).
5 I was informed by Dr. Steven Snape that “900.A’09” is written in pencil on the back of the photographs of JE 41438, which could indicate the exact provenance of the offering table, yet the entry for this unlocated tomb in Garstang’s excavations notebook for 1909 mentions another offering table.
6 The signs now disappeared or in a bad state of preservation, drawn after the archival photo A. 400 (fig. 2), are rendered in dotted lines in the facsimile (fig. 3).
An Offering Table of a Prophet of Onuris from Abydos

Cairo, Egyptian Museum JE 41438 (TR 23/1/15/7)
A boon which the king gives (to) Osiris, foremost of the west, the great god, lord of Abydos, that he may give all offerings and all provisions, and every good and pure thing of which the god lives, the Osiris, the third prophet of (On)uris, Djedbastetioufankh, son of Hor, justified.

f. The orthography 𓊦𓊪 was introduced in the private inscriptions during the 25th Dynasty (c. 740-730 BC) and continued to be used down to the Ptolemaic era, see A. Leahy, “The Name of Osiris Written 𓊦𓊪”, SAK 7, 1979, p. 141-153; D.A. Aston, J.H. Taylor, “The Family of Takeloth III and the ‘Theban’ Twenty-Third Dynasty”, in A. Leahy (ed.), Libya and Egypt c. 1300-750 BC, London, 1990, p. 149 (as 720 BC).


h. The sequence 𓊪𓊪 nbw 𓊦𓊦 only started to be included in the offering formula from the 25th Dynasty, see e.g. P. Munro, op. cit., p. 187-188, pl. 1-2, fig. 4, 7. At Abydos, it was attested as the first gift in the late 25th-early 26th Dynasty, see P. Munro, op. cit., p. 262, pl. 27, fig. 97 (Bologna 1939), p. 276, pl. 34, fig. 123 (Cairo TR 29/10/24/1); K. Jansen-Winkeln, op. cit., p. 397 (Chicago OIM 5740-50).

i. The name of the god 𓊦𓊪 is peculiarly written without 𓊦. It was either forgotten (because of its closeness to the 𓊩), or the nbw-jar was employed to serve both signs (nbw and nb).
A definite dating for this monument cannot be easily specified since the owner’s family is not known apart from the father’s name. Also, the sole title included within the inscriptions does not provide sufficient data to positively link the offering table with any other monument. The orthography 제5, however, provides a starting point for the dating since it began to be employed in private inscriptions during the 25th Dynasty (cf. n. [f]).

The carving of the reliefs on the offering table is not definite for the dating since it has no exact parallel. The disposition of the food offerings in three rows in the lower half of the surface does not fall under the classic type of the 25th Dynasty,9 it rather has a close resemblance to an Abydene example dating to the 26th Dynasty.10

The textual details (n. [c], [g], [h]) provide a more specific time span since they are attested on Abydene monuments in the late 25th-early 26th Dynasty/ latter half of the 7th c. BC. Accordingly, the offering table JE 41438 (TR 23/1/15/7) is most probably so dated; and thus Djedbastetiuufankh can be added to the short list of the priests of Onuris (n. [d]) who lived during that period in the Abydos-Thinis region.
An Offering Table of a Prophet of Onuris from Abydos Cairo, Egyptian Museum JE 41438 (TR 23/1/15/7)

© IFAO 2020

BIFAO en ligne
https://www.ifao.egnet.net
Fig. 3. Offering Table JE 41438 (TR 23/1/15/7).
Fig. 4. Offering Table JE 41438 (TR 23/1/15/7) upon discovery.

Fig. 5. Offering Table JE 41438 (TR 23/1/15/7).