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CONTENTS

	PAGE
A MAGICAL IVORY Alan W. Shorter	1
IRON IN EGYPT G. A. Wainwright	3
ENTERTAINMENT IN THE VILLAGES OF GRAECO- ROMAN EGYPT W. L. Westermann	16
AN EGYPTIAN IN BABYLONIA Sidney Smith	28
ON EGYPTIAN ART H. Frankfort	33
THE ART OF THE 'AMARNAH PERIOD' Elaine Tankard	49
KING AY, THE SUCCESSOR OF TUTANKHAMÜN Percy E. Newberry	50
SCRIBES' PALETTES IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM. (Part I) S. R. K. Glanville	53
THE OCCURRENCE OF NATRON IN ANCIENT EGYPT A. Lucas	62
THE KEFTIU SPELL F. G. Gordon	67
A PETITION FOR RELIEF FROM A GUARDIANSHIP. P. MICH. INV. NO. 2922 A. E. R. Boak	69
BIBLIOGRAPHY: GRAECO-ROMAN EGYPT. A. POPYRI (1930-1931) H. J. M. Milne, A. D. Nock, H. I. Bell, J. G. Milne, N. H. Baynes, F. de Zulueta, M. E. Dicker, R. M'Kenzie	77
BIBLIOGRAPHY: GREEK INSCRIPTIONS (1929- 1930) Marcus N. Tod	105
TWO STATUETTES OF THE GODDESS SEKHMET- UBASTET Alan W. Shorter	121
THE USE OF NATRON IN MUMMIFICATION A. Lucas	125
MISCELLANEA P. E. Newberry	141
PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THE EXCAVATIONS AT TELL EL-'AMARNAH, 1931-2 J. D. S. Pendlebury	143
STUDIES IN THE EGYPTIAN MEDICAL TEXTS Warren R. Dawson	150
TWO RELIEFS IN THE LOUVRE REPRESENTING THE GÍZAH SPHINX Alexandre Piankoff	155
LETOPOLIS G. A. Wainwright	159

CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE RELATIONS OF THE ELEVENTH DYNASTY AND THE HERACLEOPOLITANS T. J. C. Baly	173
TO WHAT EXTENT DID THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS EMPLOY BITUMEN FOR EMBALMING? ... Percy E. Spielmann	177
BIBLIOGRAPHY: CHRISTIAN EGYPT (1931-32) ... De Lacy O'Leary	181
NOTES AND NEWS	108, 189
NOTICES OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS	112, 192
LIST OF PLATES	201
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT	203
NOTICES OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS, DETAILED LIST	204
INDEX	205

TWO RELIEFS IN THE LOUVRE REPRESENTING THE GĪZAH SPHINX

BY ALEXANDRE PIANKOFF

Representations of the god Harmachis in the form of a sphinx are not common. The Louvre, however, possesses two typical examples. These are the stelae B 18 and B 19, almost identical, which formed the side walls of a small structure built between the fore-paws of the Gîzah Sphinx. They were discovered in 1816, during Caviglia's excavations, a report on which, drawn up by Salt, is to be found in Colonel H. Vyse's *Operations carried on at the Pyramids of Ghizeh in 1837*, vol. III, appendix (London, 1842). The plate opposite p. 110 of this work represents B 18 *in situ*, attached to the left wall of a little chapel built between the Sphinx's paws at right angles to the so-called Dream Stela. A detailed drawing of it, with a description by Birch, occupies the plate facing p. 117. Stela B 19, which stood opposite to B 18, is said by Salt to have fallen and to have been sent to the British Museum. How they both reached the Louvre is not known. De Rougé describes them¹, and notes that they once stood in front of the Gîzah Sphinx beside the stela of Tuthmosis IV.

They are of white limestone, very friable and damaged by salt, which has loosened and flaked off the surface of the relief in the upper right-hand part of B 19, leaving only vague outlines of the scene; the left half of B 18 has suffered in the same way. Both are painted red to resemble granite and so to harmonize with the Dream Stela. B 18 measures 1.05 m. in height by 1.00 m. in width, and B 19 1.07 m. by 1.50 m. B 19 is figured here.

In both scenes Ramesses II is adoring a sphinx on a pedestal. In B 18 the sphinx faces left, in B 19 right. In both the king looks towards the sphinx. In B 18 he presents the censer with his right hand and holds in his left a vase with handle and curved spout. In B 19, however, he holds the censer in his loosely hanging left hand while his empty right hand is raised in adoration. An altar, identical in the two reliefs, stands before the king; in B 18 it is surmounted by three lotus flowers with long stalks, in B 19 by one only.


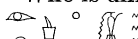
The king wears the *nemes* headdress and the royal beard. His Horus-name (preserved in B 18), carried by a *ka*-sign with arms holding the one the feather and the other the sceptre, is written behind him. Above the king is the solar disk flanked by two uraei, each with an *ankh*-sign at its neck; that on the left wears the red crown, that on the right the white. Thus in B 18, where the inscription speaks of the red crown, this is borne by the uraeus which faces the sphinx; while in B 19, in which the king is said to "assume the white crown," it is this crown which is borne by the uraeus which faces the sphinx. It is curious that the two crowns do not correspond in position to the north and south respectively, for B 18 with its red crown was actually found in position on the south side of the chapel, while B 19 comes from the north.

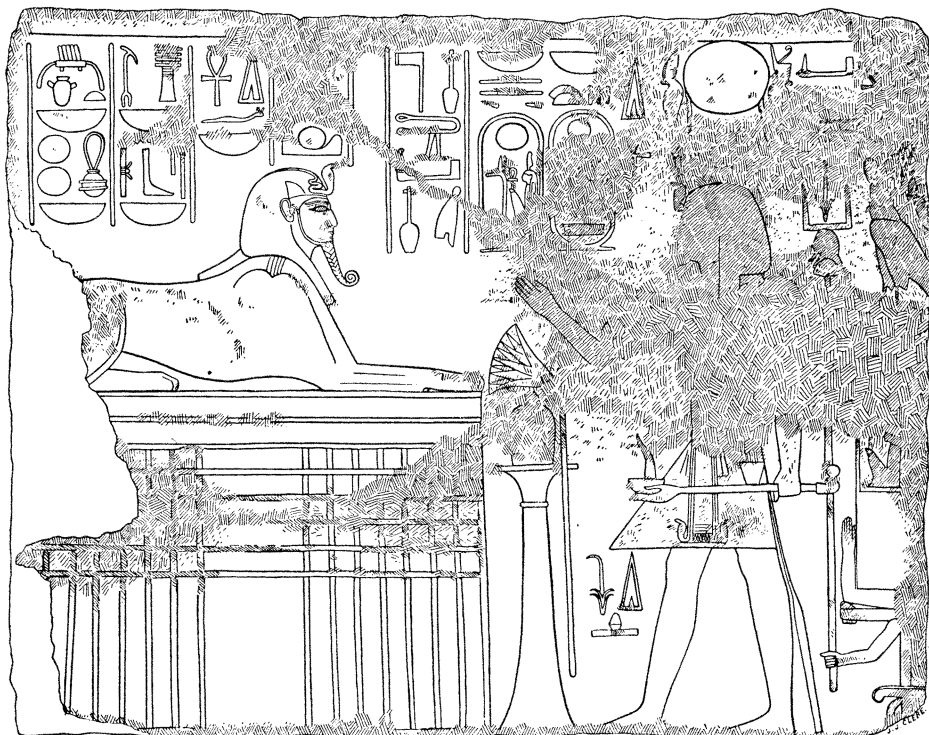
The upper part of both stelae is given up to the inscriptions, written in vertical columns. In B 19 we read over the sphinx "Harmachis²; may he give all life, all stability and prosperity, all health and all joy, like Rēc every day." In front of the king is "The Good God, who seizes the white crown, Lord of the Two Lands, Usimarēc..., Lord of Crowns Ra..., endowed



¹ *Notice des monuments exposés dans la Galerie d'antiquités ég. au Musée du Louvre*, 8e éd., 60-61.

² Restoring *Hr m ȝht*.

with life." Under the solar disk stood the usual *Bhditi*, "He of Edfu," which is preserved in B 18. Behind the king stands "May he give life, stability and prosperity," also complete in B 18. Below, between the king and the altar, stands "An offering which the king gives." The king raises his hand, and by this gesture consecrates the offerings presented to the god¹.

The inscriptions of B 18 are similar except that the king's title "The Good God" is here followed by , "Who is united to the red crown," while the inscription between the king and the altar reads , "Censing and making libation." This act accompanies all presentations of offerings and is very frequently represented².



In B 18 the Horus name , "Strong Bull, beloved of Maat," is well preserved. It is to be noted that in Vyse's copy this stela shows both to right and left a vertical column of inscription giving the names , "Two Mistresses Protector of Egypt and Subduer of the Foreign Lands, Golden Horus" These two columns must have been sawn off after the removal of the monument.

The lower part of both stelae is covered with Greek graffiti made almost illegible by salt. At the very bottom of B 18, however, one can still distinctly read ΕΥΦΡΟΥΝΟC.

These two stelae have a special interest in view of their provenance. Do they give us an Egyptian representation of the Great Sphinx?

¹ Cf., for the same gesture, J. Capart, *Abydos, le temple de Seti Ier*, Pl. xlv; Mariette, *Abydos*, I, Pl. 44; L., *D.*, III, Bl. 48, 143; Moret, *Rituel du Culte Divin en Égypte*, pp. iii and 120.

² The king is making the same gesture as in the Dream Stela. Cf. L., *D.*, III, Bl. 147, 212; Capart, *op. cit.*, Pls. xxxix (libation and fumigation), xxxii, xix; Gayet, *Le temple de Louxor*, 1er fasc. (*Miss. arch. franç. au Caire*, tome xv), Pl. xlix.

The sphinx shown in them, in which de Rougé thought he recognized the features of Ramesses II, is a human-headed lion, wearing the *kleft*-headdress, the uraeus on its forehead, a short plait of hair falling on to the back, and the divine beard on the chin. It is called Harmachis, *i.e.*, Horus on the Horizon. The base on which it rests is a pedestal with vertical edges. In the centre is a door. The form and decoration of this pedestal recall the *srekh* in which the Horus-name of the Pharaoh is commonly written. There are five more representations of the same kind, all of which have been regarded by those who have described and published them as figures of the Great Sphinx. They are, in chronological order:

Stela 12974 of the Louvre, once in the collection of the Comte de Saint-Ferriol, and published and described by Moret¹. It seems to belong to the Eighteenth Dynasty, probably to the reign of Tuthmosis IV, and shows the god Harmachis in the form of a sphinx.

Two stelae published by Hölscher. One bears the cartouche of Amenophis III above the sphinx. On the other, dated by Hölscher to the reign of Tuthmosis IV, the sphinx is called *Hr-m-ꜣḥt*, "Horus in the Horizon."

The Dream Stela (attributed to Tuthmosis IV) and the so-called Stela of Cheops' Daughter, where the sphinx is called "The Sphinx (*hw*) of Harmachis."

While in all these cases the sphinx is shown as a human-headed lion there are important variations of detail. In one of Hölscher's stelae the headdress is surmounted by the solar disk and two uraei, in the other by a headdress resembling the *atef*-crown.

The beard varies. In Louvre B 18 the forward curving divine beard is quite clear. It is plaited like the fragment of that of the Great Sphinx which dates from the New Empire (sent by Caviglia to the British Museum) and the similar fragment recently discovered by Baraize. This detail is not quite clear in Louvre Stela 12974, where Moret sees the square-cut royal beard, though the damaged condition of the stela leaves this doubtful. Hölscher's stela with the cartouche of Amenophis III has the royal beard, while the other has the curved beard². The sphinxes of the Dream Stela have divine beards; the stela of the Daughter of Cheops is damaged at this point.

The pedestal, too, shows variations. It may be in the form of a rectangular naos as in Louvre B 18 and 19, or of a mastaba with sloping sides as in Hölscher's stelae. The flat block on which the sphinx rests is usually very simple. In Louvre E. 12974, however, it has the Egyptian cavetto moulding, and, what is more important, the whole pedestal is set on a base with a sloping front cut into six steps. Moret has pointed out the interest of this variation in the article cited above. It seems that the centre of the naos was generally occupied by a door. This is quite clear in the Louvre reliefs and the Dream Stela, but absent in the Stela of Cheops' Daughter; Hölscher's stelae are too damaged to allow its presence or absence to be determined.

These variants in the form of the beard and the pedestal³ might be attributed to the fact that successive restorations had modified the appearance of the Great Sphinx and given differing models to the artists who copied it on the stelae⁴. But it is not necessary to suppose


¹ Moret, *Mon. ég. de la collection du Comte de Saint-Ferriol*, round-topped stela of Merhet; *Rev. ég.* (1919), Pl. iv.

² Vyse, *op. cit.*, III, plate opposite p. 109; Hölscher, *Grabdenkmal des Königs Chephren*, 107-8; *British Museum Guide to the Egyptian Galleries* (sculpture) (1909), 7.

³ It would seem that the excavations begun by Baraize round the Gîzah Sphinx now suggest that the buildings of Old Kingdom date decorated with niche-and-buttress work and the door which lie in front of the Sphinx may have given the impression that it was set upon a pedestal of the *srekh*-type provided with a door. At present the mound of sand which has not been removed prevents one from getting this view of the whole, which has been rendered, in accordance with the rules of Egyptian perspective, by a representation of the façade surmounted by the Sphinx seen *in side view*.

⁴ On the subject of the Great Sphinx's beard see Borchardt, in *Sitzungsber. der preuss. Akad.* (Berlin, 1897), 753.

this. It must not be forgotten that Egyptian draughtsmen did not copy faithfully the appearance of the monuments which they reproduced. They interpreted them at their will, adding symbolical details, or omitting such characteristics as seemed to them of minor importance. Thus Davies, who has studied all the representations of the palace of Amenophis IV in the tombs of Tell el-'Amarnah, came to the conclusion that an Egyptian artist never felt himself under any obligation to reproduce a monument as it actually was. He narrowed or broadened it according to the space available for it in the main scene¹. In fact, if we compare an Egyptian building with an ancient representation of it we find that the number of columns or statues never corresponds to the actual number, but merely serves to indicate that in such a position there were columns or statues; thus in a representation of the Karnak temple two columns on each side of the pylon are used to represent a whole hall².

The headdresses of the sphinxes shown on Hölscher's stelae might be symbolic expressions of the phrase  found on the Dream Stela, and translated by Erman "The Shadow of Rēc which hovers over the Sphinx³."

We may therefore conclude that the reliefs B 18 and 19 represent, like the Dream Stela, which has a similar figure which Erman clearly interprets in this sense, the Great Sphinx of Gîzah beside which they were found. The differences between these, the Great Sphinx itself, and other representations of it, are to be explained as variants arising almost of necessity out of the method of interpretation which the Egyptians adopted in reproducing their monuments⁴.

To judge by the names which accompany the figures of the sphinx on the stelae one might suppose that it was regarded sometimes as the god Horakhti and at others as the king in the form of this god, according to period. To this view subscribes Hölscher, who sees in one of his stelae a figure of the Great Sphinx of Gîzah conceived as a representation of Amenophis III. De Rougé seems to have had the same idea when he described Louvre B 18 and 19 as effigies of Ramesses II. This is no unusual phenomenon, for other divine statues have borrowed human features. The statue of Amūn in the Louvre with the mask of Tutankhamūn is by no means unique, and it is not unlikely that after a restoration or clearance the Gîzah Sphinx should sometimes have been regarded as an image of the reigning king, especially in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties, while in later days, such as those of the Dream Stela and the Stela of Cheops' Daughter, the Sphinx was regarded as a very old monument which personified the god Harmachis himself.

¹ Davies, *El Amarna*, vi, 36.

² Borchardt, *Zur Baugeschichte des Amontempels von Karnak*, Fig. 17, p. 27.

³ Erman, in *Sitzungsber. d. preuss. Akad.* (Berlin, 1904), 428, 1063.

⁴ For similar interpretations see G. Bénédict, *Signa Verba* in *Recueil Champollion* (Paris, 1922), 38.