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Hermann Junker

Fragments of a Statuette of Chephren

By

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In working over the fragments of royal statues discovered by GEORGE A. REISNER during the course of the Harvard-Boston excavations in the cemetery west of the Great Pyramid at Giza, it gradually became apparent to me that several of these belonged to a statuette of Chephren that had a rare design on the back of the block throne which included figures of Horus and Seth¹ (Figs. 1-3). Such an idea had occurred already to BORCHARDT when he was cataloguing the bits of smashed statues found in the clearance of the temples of the Second Pyramid². He assumed that this design showed the two gods binding together the two plants of Upper and Lower Egypt as they appear on the sides of certain of the limestone statues of Sesostri I. from the court of his pyramid temple at Lisht in Dynasty XII³. Since there were only two small pieces, one with the head of Seth and the other with an arm and hand holding a staff (which BORCHARDT interpreted as the hieroglyph for 'Millions of Years'), it is not surprising that little attention has been paid to them. However, they help to support a restoration of the Western Cemetery fragments into a simpler design than that of the Twelfth Dynasty. Standing figures of the two gods, holding Was-scepters, seem to have been placed on each side of the frame of the Horus-name of Chephren (Fig. 2).

This is an early instance of the appearance of Horus and Seth

¹ The statuette must originally have been about 90 cms. high or approximately one-half life-size. The pieces are in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts where they are partly registered under the numbers 21.951 and 21.952. The Expedition numbers for the fragments are: 12-12-176, 14-2-3, 14-11-107, 14-12-49, 65, 71, 72. The portion of the face (21-951) has been published in SMITH, *A History of Egyptian Sculpture and Painting in the Old Kingdom*, Pl. 12b. See also pp. 33-35 of that volume for other fragmentary royal statues found at Giza and pp. 36-37 for designs on the thrones of Fourth Dynasty royal statues.

² L. BORCHARDT in UVO HÖLSCHER, *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs Chephren*, p. 100, Figs. 123, 125.

³ J. E. GAUTHIER and G. JÉQUIER, *Fouilles de Licht*, *Mémoires de l'Institut Français*, 6 (1902), pp. 33ff.

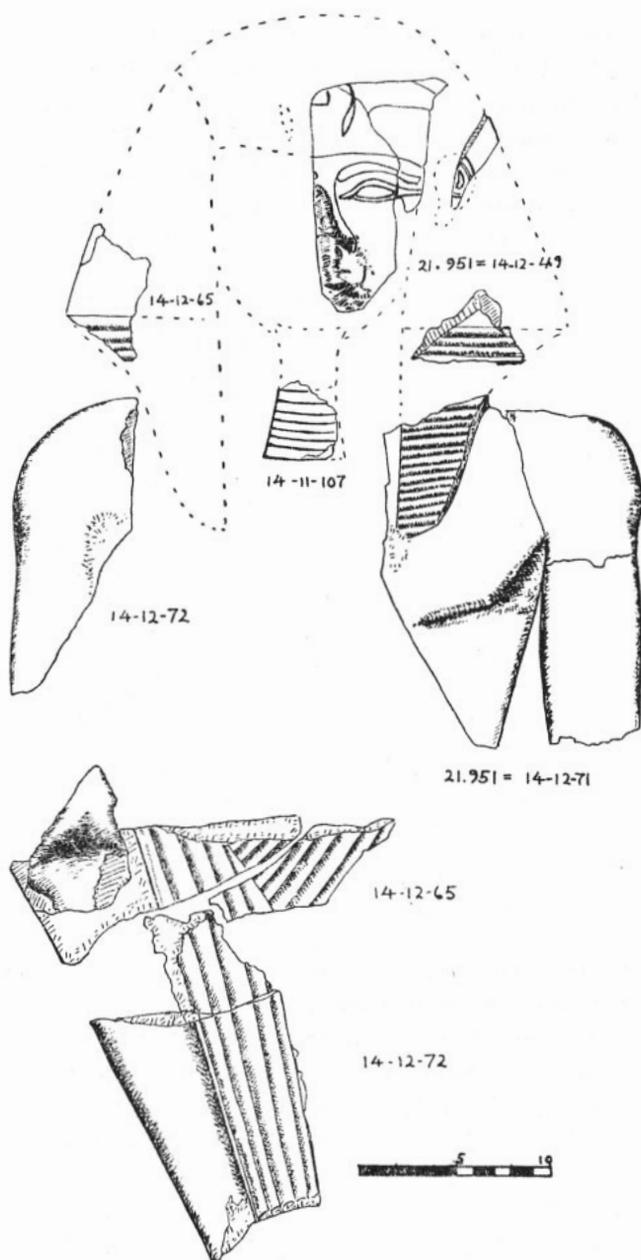


Fig. 1. Head, shoulders and lap of Chephren statuette.

as representatives respectively of Lower and Upper Egypt. It reflects the part which they play in the partitioning of the Kingdom of Osiris through the judgement of the earth god Geb in the Shabako text of the so-called Memphite Theology to which HERMANN JUNKER has devoted such illuminating study⁴. It thus seemed appropriate to make this tentative reconstruction known at a time when Professor JUNKER is being honored on his eightieth birthday, especially since the fragments

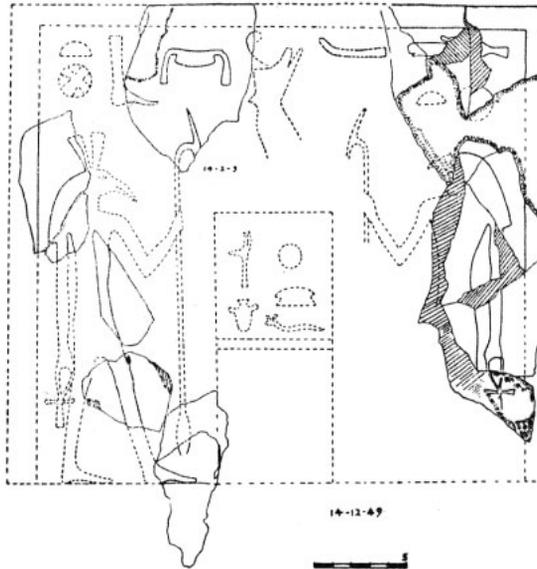


Fig. 2. Back of throne of Chephren statuette.

belonged to the same group of broken statues which were widely scattered in his own neighboring excavations at Giza⁵. It is believed that in the turbulent conditions at the end of the Old Kingdom the royal statues were smashed in the pyramid temples. Pieces of a manageable size were apparently carried to the shelter of the chapels of the tombs along the western and southern sides of the Cheops Pyramid where

⁴ HERMANN JUNKER, *Die Götterlehre von Memphis; Die politische Lehre von Memphis; Abhandlungen der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Klasse*, 1939, No. 23, pp. 1-77; 1941, No. 6, pp. 1-73.

⁵ JUNKER, *Giza*, 3, p. 226; *Giza*, 8, p. 56; *Giza*, 10, pp. 18, 40, 64.

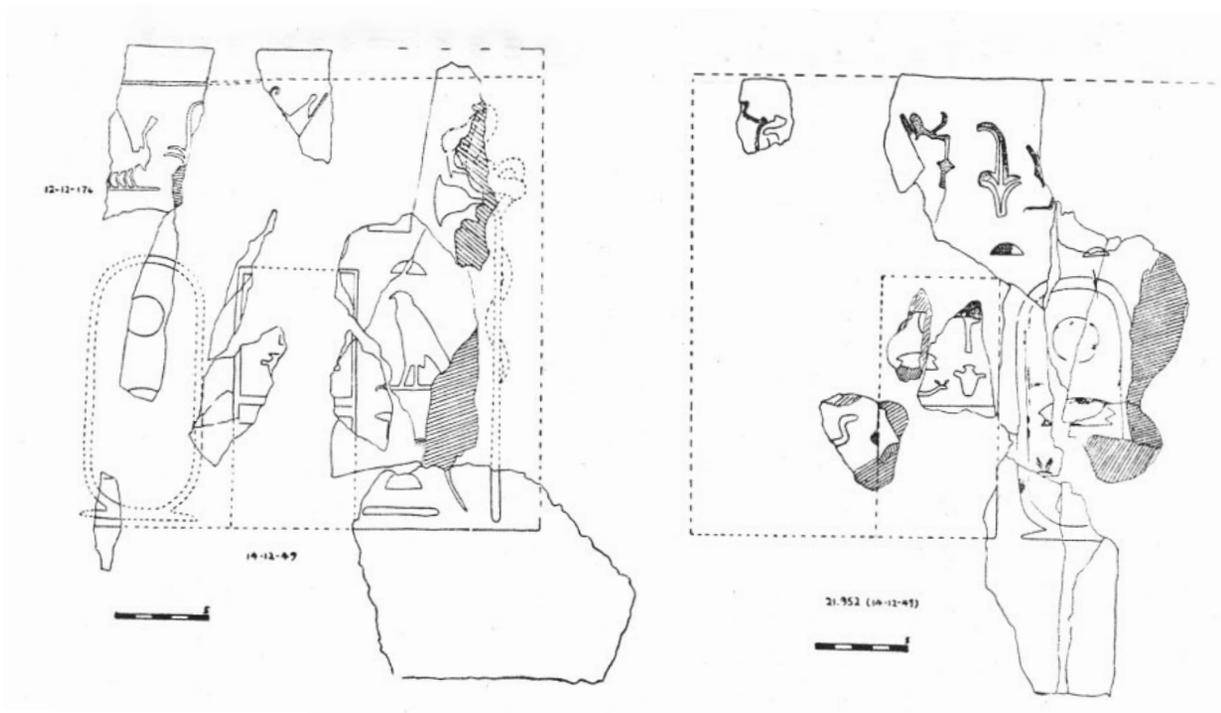


Fig. 3. Sides of throne of Chephren statuette.

they served as material from which to fashion small alabaster offering vessels. One of these workshops was close to the statue chambers of the large tomb of Prince Ba-baf (G 5230). The hard stone statuettes of this man were also broken up and some of the alabaster pieces were found at a considerable distance to the west. A portion of the back of the throne of the royal statuette of Chephren under discussion was discovered with parts of the inscription from the back plinth of an alabaster figure of Ba-baf⁶.

The identical designs which can be partially restored on the sides of the throne of our Chephren statuette (Fig. 3) are again unlike those known from other Old Kingdom royal statues. The Horus and cartouche names of the king are given side by side. Behind the Horus frame, the cobra goddess Buto is poised above the curving top of a papyrus plant⁷. This way of representing Buto, with the tail of the serpent coiled about the stem of the plant is found on very few surviving examples of the Old Kingdom. However, it appears already on one end of the curtain box of Queen Hetep-heres, the mother of Cheops. Buto should be flanked on the other side of the royal names by the vulture goddess Nekhbet in order to represent the southern and northern parts of the united land as do the figures of Horus and Seth on the back of the throne. From the surviving fragments it is not easy to see how the craftsman can have incorporated the usual version of the spreading wings of the vulture into his design. Nevertheless the ends of the Hetep-heres curtain box⁸ remind us that an individually conceived pattern could be devised with considerable ingenuity and with a disregard for absolute symmetry.

⁶ The fragment of royal inscription, No. 14-2-3 on Fig. 2, was in shaft G 4833 B with part of one of the alabaster figures of Ba-baf; SMITH, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-51, Pl. 19b; DUNHAM in *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, 37 (1939), p. 117.

⁷ I am not certain how the vertical column of hieroglyphs, between the Horus frame and Buto, should be completed at the top. DR. HANS GOEDICKE suggests to me that this might read: "Appearing on the throne of Horus eternally" as in G. JÉQUIER, *Le Monument Funéraire de Pepy II*, II, Pl. 16 and with variations in the temple of Sahura.

⁸ G. A. REISNER and W. S. SMITH, *A History of the Giza Necropolis*, II, Fig. 29, Pl. 11.