



Head from a royal shawabti

Not on display

Title/Description: Head from a royal shawabti

Object Type: Figure

Materials: Faience

Measurements: h. 40 x w. 40 x d. 30 mm

Accession Number: 683

Historic Period: Dynasty XXX (380-343 BC)

Production Place: Africa, Egypt

Credit Line: Purchased with support from Robert and Lisa Sainsbury, 1977

The figurine, which is broken away below the shoulders, is certainly royal, since it wears the striated *nemes* head-dress with coiled *uraeus* serpent, the head of which is broken away. The eyebrows and the rims of the eyes are in relief. The ears are large and set well back, the lobes show no evidence of marks to indicate piercing. The figure is not provided with a beard; the pigtail behind is missing.

The dimensions of the statuette favour an interpretation as a *shawabti*. By the edge of the lappet on the left shoulder can be seen a cord which would have been attached to a bag carried on the back of such figures (see no. 267). Royal *shawabtis* of the Late Period of Egyptian history are uncommon (see Aubert and Aubert, 1974: 210-15, 243-6, and for a recent overview, Schneider, 1993). It is probable that the present figurine can be added to their number. It is less likely to be a votive figure of a sovereign offered at one of the temples or shrines. Professor Hans Schneider (personal communication, 1993) ascribes it to the xxvith Dynasty and identifies it as probably Necho 11 or Psammetichus n on the evidence of the striated wig.

Entry taken from Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Collection 3 volume catalogue, edited by Steven Hooper (Yale University Press, 1997).

Provenance

Purchased by the Sainsbury Centre, University of East Anglia from Peter Sharrer in 1977 out of funds provided by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury.
