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AN EGYPTIAN SCULPTORS' MODEL OF THE LATE PERIOD IN THE PUSHKIN STATE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, MOSCOW (ГМИИ I, 1A 4127)

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The article proposes an attribution for a model of a royal sculpture (ГМИИ I, 1a 4127). The artifact seems to find a rather close parallel in the sculpture head Cairo CG 838, which was attributed to the king Hakoris of the Dynasty XXIX (392/1–379/8 BC). Perhaps, this attribution can be reinforced by comparing the Moscow model with some reliefs of Hakoris emphasizing his youthful features.

Keywords: Ancient Egypt, Late Period, royal sculpture, sculptors' model, Hakoris, the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts

ЕГИПЕТСКАЯ СКУЛЬПТУРНАЯ МОДЕЛЬ ПОЗДНЕГО ВРЕМЕНИ В СОБРАНИИ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОГО МУЗЕЯ ИЗОБРАЗИТЕЛЬНЫХ ИСКУССТВ ИМЕНИ А.С. ПУШКИНА (ГМИИ I, 1A 4127)

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В статье обосновывается атрибуция египетской модели царской скульптуры Позднего времени (ГМИИ I, 1а 4127). Наиболее показательной параллелью данному памятнику представляется скульптурная голова из Каирского музея (CG 838), атрибуированная царю XXIX династии Акорису (392/1–379/8 гг. до н.э.). Возможно, такая атрибуция может быть дополнительно аргументирована сравнением московской модели с некоторыми рельефами времени Акориса, акцентирующими в его образе юношеские черты.

Ключевые слова: древний Египет, Позднее время, царская скульптура, скульптурные модели, Акорис, ГМИИ им. А.С. Пушкина

The Egyptian collection of the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow, preserves a number of sculpture objects, which have not been properly studied so far. One of them is a bust of a king, which undoubtedly served as a sculptors' model¹ (ГМИИ I, 1а 4127; fig. 1–4). The artifact had once been bought in Egypt by the famous Russian Egyptologist and collector of Egyptian antiquities Vladimir Golenischeff, purchased from him by the Russian state and became a part of the Museum's collection at its foundation in 1909–1911². The provenance of the object, like most Golenischeff's acquisitions, is unknown. It was briefly described in a signal publication shortly after the foundation of the Museum³ and in due course in the fundamental catalogue of its Egyptian sculpture by Oleg Berlev and Svetlana Hodjash (see below). The problem that remains unsolved is its overall interpretation and, in the first place, its attribution.

The material of the object is limestone, which acquired a light brown colour; it is 18 cm high, 14 cm wide and 11.5 cm thick. The model represents a king wearing *nemes*, of which only strips over his forehead and lappets falling on the shoulders are shown; the top of the head and the arms below the shoulder-joints are absent, and so is the body below the upper part of the breast. The back of the image is a flat surface, which bears a wide net indicating the proportions of the figure; the presence of the net shows definitely that this is a sculptors' model. *Nemes* indicates that the individual portrayed is a king⁴, let alone that there was no practical need to create a standard model for an image of a private person, not likely to be replicated. The king is shown young although the image does not allow to define his age: it might easily be from teens to twenties and, together with the delicateness and the symmetry of facial features, rather indicate a high degree of the image's idealization. The eyes are almond-shaped and not wide; their lower lids are rounder than the upper ones, and the latter are detailed with wide line well-elongated to the temples. The eyebrows are straight, with slight rounding to the outer sides, and their inner tips and the top of the nose form the 'inverted triangle' typical for the standard of royal sculpture in the 4th and the 3rd centuries BC⁵; perhaps, one might also speak of a slight line connecting the brows over the nose and accentuating the triangle. The nose is very slightly upturned, shows a hardly noticeable hump and has rather wide nostrils. The

¹ Liepsner 1982; Berlev, Hodjash 2004, 423; Tomoum 2005 (this publication does not take into account the artifact discussed in the present article).

² Demskaya *et al.* 1987; Bierbrier 2019, 184; Ladynin 2022, 121–161.

³ Borozdina 1917, 232, 237, pl. VI.3 (no. 2).

⁴ See on *nemes* as a purely royal headdress Collier 1996, 69–78.

⁵ Josephson 1997, 5, fig. 2; Stanwick 2002, 66–69 ("Group A" of his typology); Ladynin 2021, 73–74.



Fig. 1. The sculptors' model ГМИИ I, 1a 4127, face © *Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow*



Fig. 2. The sculptors' model ГМИИ I, 1a 4127, left side © *Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow*



Fig. 3. The sculptors' model ГМИИ I, 1a 4127, right side © *Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow*



Fig. 4. The sculptors' model ГМИИ I, 1a 4127, rear © *Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow*

mouth is not big, with a very faint smile, and the upper lip is wider than the lower. The shape of the face is a rounded oval, the ears are large, elongated ovals. The regularity of the facial features is emphasized and shows a degree of their conventionalism, although the individuality is hardly totally absorbed with it⁶. Generally, the image corresponds to

⁶ The first publisher of the object T. Borozdina believed that the image is purely idealized (Borozdina 1917, 237).

the standard of the royal iconography of the 4th and the 3rd centuries BC; but its conventionalism leads to search for its analogies in the sculpture of the last native dynasties rather than of the Ptolemaic time⁷.

However, attribution to a specific ruler is problematic. The authors of the catalogue of the Egyptian sculpture in the Pushkin Museum refrained from any precise judgement on the date and the attribution of the object⁸ as well as the other sculptors' models due to their being "extremely imprecise", but agreed that the group of these objects "for the most part dates from the Ptolemaic Period"⁹. The face of the model is definitely different from the images of Nectanebo I, which show wider eyebrows turned at the outer sides much lower, wider eyes and bigger mouth and do not seem to accentuate his youthhood and the delicateness of his features¹⁰. There are no images of Amirtaeus of Dynasty XXVIII, of Nephertites I, Psamuth and Nephertites II of Dynasty XXIX, and of the second king of Dynasty XXX Tachos¹¹; and the iconography of its third king Nectanebo II is problematic as there are no inscribed images of him. It has been thought that the only such image was the sculpture head from the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts with his titles inscribed on the back pillar¹²; but Berlev and Hodjash showed by bringing analogies from Dynasty XXVI¹³ that the sculpture was not only intended to represent Osiris rather than the king but also that the resemblance of their images is questionable¹⁴. In fact, wide lines detailing the eyes and brows of that sculpture are really not typical for the royal portraits of the 4th century.

An analogy to the Moscow sculptors' model that seems helpful is a sculpture head, now at the Cairo Museum, showing a king in a blue crown with an uraeus on its forehead¹⁵ (fig. 5). The form of the eyes and the detailing of the lids seem much the same as on the Moscow model, although the head shows no elongation of the upper lids to the



Fig. 5. The sculpture head Cairo CG 838 (URL: <https://alchetron.com/Nectanebo-II>; accessed on: 04.11.2023)

⁷ See on greater individualization of the early Ptolemaic royal sculpture Josephson 1997, 42–44; Ladynin 2021, 78.

⁸ Berlev, Hodjash 2004, 427 (no. 151).

⁹ Berlev, Hodjash 2004, 423.

¹⁰ The inscribed images of the king are: a bust from Hermopolis Parva (Mansoura 25; Josephson 1997, 6, pl. 2a); a sculpture head in the white crown (Louvre E 27124; Josephson 1997, 7, pl. 2d); a standing statue from Hermopolis (Cairo JE 87298; Josephson 1997, 8, pl. 3b; Stanwick 2002, 216, fig. 201a).

¹¹ Josephson 1997, 2, 9. The reigns of Psammuthis and Nephertites II were probably too ephemeral to leave their monuments: Ladynin 2013, 1–2.

¹² Josephson 1997, 9, n. 61.

¹³ De Meulenaere, Bothmer 1969.

¹⁴ Berlev, Hodjash 2004, 361–363 (no. 117).

¹⁵ Cairo CG 838; Josephson 1997, pl. 7b.

temples. The shapes of the face and of the ears on both objects seem matching; the lower part of the nose of the sculpture head is lost but its proportions are probably the same as on the Moscow model. The brows on the sculpture head are shown by modeling the stone and it seems that they are lowering to the outer sides rather sharply; the Moscow model details the brows with less conspicuous lines but a better look at them shows that their form is virtually the same. A minor distinction between the two objects is that the lower lip of the sculpture head seems slightly bigger than the upper, while the Moscow head shows the opposite; still the width of the mouth is the same on both of them. One should say that the face of the model is more conventional and idealized, while the face of the sculpture head reveals more individuality and does not emphasize the youthhood; nevertheless, it is probable that they both represent one and the same ruler.

However, the attribution of the Cairo head is a matter of discussion. It was attributed to Hakoris of Dynasty XXIX in the classical publication by B. Bothmer as it showed “the double figure-eight coil of the uraeus”, which seemed to be out of use under Nectanebo I (the reason to assign the statue to the 4th century BC rather than to earlier times must have been its style, although the author did not say that explicitly)¹⁶. K. Myśliwiec rigidly denied that this form of uraeus could be used later than under Dynasty XXVI and assigned to that time not only this head but also a bronze kneeling statuette showing the same detail and usually attributed to Hakoris or Nectanebo II¹⁷. J. Josephson also challenged the attribution of the head to Hakoris and ascribed it to Nectanebo II, as the “tapered lower lip” and “very narrow and slanted” eyes resemble to two other sculptures which the scholar attributed to this king¹⁸. However, Bothmer’s catalogue obviously did not rule out as rigidly the continuation of this Saite form of uraeus in the early 4th century BC; and there is a reasonable view that “headgear shapes and uraei are by no means reliable as chronological markers in these late eclectic periods”¹⁹. As for Josephson’s physiognomic arguments, the lower lip of the sculpture head seems indeed bigger, as it has been said, but it is obviously not “tapered”, and its eyes, though not too wide, are not emphatically narrowed. One might add that the face of the Cairo head is obviously different from that of another head, for which the attribution to Nectanebo II was proposed²⁰. Besides, the Cairo head ascribed to Hakoris probably comes from the area of

¹⁶ Bothmer 1960, 89; see a list of publications joining this view: Grimm 1984, 15, n. 10.

¹⁷ Myśliwiec 1988, 78; *cf.* Kansas City, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art 53.13; Bothmer 1960, 88–89, pl. 67, fig. 172–173 (no. 71); Hill 2004, 166–167, pl. 65 (no. 32).

¹⁸ Josephson 1997, 28; *cf.* Philadelphia E14303 and Alexandria 23843 (Josephson 1997, 27–28, pl. 10a–b).

¹⁹ Hill 2004, 92, n. 66.

²⁰ Goyon, Gabolde 1991, 22–27. The sculpture was dated to the reign of Nectanebo II on grounds of its stylistic resemblance to three monuments ascribed to this time: Dattari statue (Brooklyn Museum 52.82), the sphinx Vienna ÄS 76, the head of a queen MMA 38.10. The dating of the latter sculpture to the 4th century BC instead of its usual attribution to Arsinoe II seems dubious, as it displays the double uraeus unattested under the last native dynasties: Nilsson 2010, 233–234, 425–426 (with bibliography); *cf.* Walker, Higgs 2001, 44 (no. 6). For doubts concerning the attribution proposed by J.-Cl. Goyon and M. Gabolde and the alternative attribution of the object to a Ptolemaic ruler see Josephson 1997, 19.



Fig. 6. The sphinx of Hakoris (Louvre A 27). *Musée du Louvre* (URL: <https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010009338>; accessed on: 04.11.2023)



Fig. 7. The sphinx of Nephertites I (Louvre A 26). *Musée du Louvre* (URL: <https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010007879>; accessed on: 04.11.2023)

Hakoris' native town of Mendes, and its stone is similar to the inscribed Hakoris' torso from Ahnas el-Medina²¹.

Thus, the attribution of the head to Hakoris should by no means be discarded. A natural verification for it would have been the comparison with an inscribed sphinx of Hakoris expected to reproduce his individual features²² (fig. 6). J. Josephson left the sphinxes totally outside his typology of the 4th century portraits insisting that they presented “an overridealized uniformity inconsistent with the idea that the kings of Egypt had recognizable portraits of themselves” and their style “may derive from workshops separate from those dedicated to anthropoid statues”; besides, he stressed affinities in modeling and repairs of the sphinx of Hakoris and that of Nephertites I²³ (fig. 7), which made them “so similar as to make a pair”²⁴. Their similarity should possibly not be overrated, as a larger face and the greater distance between the eyes of the sphinx of Nephertites I are easily noticeable; the distortion of facial features (nose and mouth) due to repairs is more of an obstacle to use these images as a reference point for attribution. Still the eyes and the brows of Hakoris' sphinx seem to

²¹ Grimm 1984, 14; Hill 2004, 91–92 and n. 66.

²² Louvre A 27; Josephson 1997, pl. 1d.

²³ Louvre A 26; Josephson 1997, pl. 1c.

²⁴ Josephson 1997, 4.



Fig. 8. A relief fragment with the king Hakoris (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, EGA 75-1949; Myśliwiec 1988, pl. LXXIVb)

K. Myśliwiec, an important feature of Hakoris' representations on his reliefs is his youthhood: it is suggested with the "chin's lower contour, running horizontally towards the neck or slanting insignificantly", the diminished volume of the lower part of the face, and a "sensitive modelling of the thick-lipped and slightly protruding mouth" giving to the face "a feeling of serenity". Besides, Hakoris' nose is "slightly retroussé" on a number of reliefs, and the "almond-shaped and almost imperceptibly slanting eyes" are modeled with rims, the upper of them extended beyond the corner of the eye²⁸ (fig. 8). Virtually all these traits are found in the Moscow sculptors' model as seen in the profile (fig. 2). Certainly, the iconography of royal reliefs absorbs individuality to a greater extent than the iconography of sculpture; however, should the observations by Myśliwiec really define the specific feature of Hakoris' official portraiture, they give more reason to attribute to him the Moscow head. Consequently, the identity of the ruler it portrays with that of the Cairo sculpture head, if verily established, supports the attribution of the latter object to Hakoris.

Thus, to say the least, the Moscow sculptors' model, and Cairo sculpture head CG 838, as its closest parallel, can be attributed to the same king of the 4th century BC, whose images were created in conformity with the iconographic standard of the time. His identity with Hakoris cannot be firmly established but is plausible. Perhaps, one more argument

have remained intact: the brows of the sphinx are much the same as on the Cairo head, but the distance between the eyes of the sphinx is slightly lesser, they seem wider and their placement on the face is different (they are rather downturned, with rounder upper and flatter lower rims, while the sculpture head shows almond-shaped eyes). Oddly enough, a similar considerable variation in the placement of eyes is observed on two inscribed images of Ptolemy II²⁵: they are almond-shaped on the Vatican statue²⁶ and downturned, with flat lower lids on the Strasbourg fragment²⁷. Thus, though the comparison between the faces of Hakoris' sphinx and the Cairo sculpture does not positively support the latter's attribution to this king, it probably does not preclude this possibility either.

However, an additional argument for this possibility might be provided by the Moscow sculptors' model. According to

²⁵ See Ladynin 2021, 78.

²⁶ Museo Gregoriano Egizio 22681; Josephson 1997, pl. 13c; Ashton 2001, 84–85, fig. 6 (no. 6); Stanwick 2002, 157, fig. 2–3 (no. A3); Brophy 2015, 112–113, fig. 37 (no. 37).

²⁷ Strasbourg 1585; Bothmer 1960, 121–122, pl. 90 (no. 96); Josephson 1997, pl. 13d; Ashton 2001, 84–85, fig. 5 (no. 5); Stanwick 2002, 99, 158, fig. 6 (no. A5); Brophy 2015, 131, fig. 56 (no. 56).

²⁸ Myśliwiec 1988, 76–77, pl. LXXIc, LXXIIIa, LXXIVb, LXXV.

for it is the length of Hakoris' reign (392/1–379/8 BC) exceeding that of any other king of the 4th century BC except Nectanebos I and II²⁹. This reign left plenty of monuments including royal statuary, mostly known in fragments³⁰; so it is reasonable to expect the existence of sculptors' models that provided for its replication.

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²⁹ Ladynin 2013, 1.

³⁰ Traunecker 1979, 411–419.

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