

Ankh-ef-(en)-Khonsu

Faience, green glaze, details added in black
Third Intermediate Period, 21st–22nd Dynasty
From Abydos

H. 10.5 cm. W. 3.9 cm. D. 2.4 cm.

ex F. A. Downes Collection formed in Egypt in the early 1920s; ex Julian Bird Collection (London)
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A mummiform *shabti* wearing a plain tripartite wig. Breasts are modelled below the front lappets of the wig despite the owner of the group being a man. The arms are boldly defined and are crossed right over left above the waist and the clenched hands hold a pair of hoes that are modelled in raised relief and painted black. A rectangular basket is defined in shallow relief on the back of the *shabti* and, although rather faint, diamond-hatched details are added in black. The face is pleasantly defined and has faint details of a small nose and gently smiling mouth. The eyes are clearly modelled and the pupils are added in black. The ears are fairly well shaped and protrude in front of the lappets of the wig. A vertical column of a hieroglyphic inscription is painted in black on the front of the *shabti* that names the owner as Ankh-ef-(en)-Khonsu (He lives for Khonsu).¹ The *shabti* has a lustrous glaze.

'Overseer' *shabtis* are also known for this owner. Instead of the usual bipartite wig associated with 'overseers' they wear a tripartite wig, although the rear lappet is not indicated in the modelling. Breasts are similarly modelled below the front lappets of the wig although they are less obvious perhaps. The usual pose for an 'overseer' *shabti* is to have one arm held across the chest with the other hanging by the side of the body, however, on 'overseer' *shabtis* for Ankh-ef-(en)-Khonsu the arms are crossed right over left and they hold a pair of hoes – the same as found on the worker *shabtis*. This suggests that the latter were sometimes modified into a 'overseers' by applying a short

projecting apron on the front of the waist. A vertical column of inscription on the front of the legs below the projecting apron gives the owner's name.

Of the known parallel *shabtis* for Ankh-ef-(en)-Khonsu (see the following database) the colour of the glaze varies from bright blue (Carmarthen CM 75.692), which would have been the original colour of the group, to various shades of green.

Parallel examples in Carmarthen are securely recorded as coming from Abydos from the time when Harold Jones joined excavations at the site directed by John Garstang in 1906–1907. Although born in Barnsley, Jones had connections with Carmarthen. He was educated in the local Grammar School. Jones donated antiquities to the Carmarthen Museum as well as Swansea Museum.²

Inscription



Wsir ʿnh.f-(n)-Ḥns.w m3^c-ḥrw

The Osiris, Ankh-ef-(en)-Khonsu,
justified.

Typology and database of *shabtis* for Ankh-ef-(en)-Khonsu

Shabti types and subtypes from a study of parallel examples to be found in museum collections, private collections and those offered for sale at auctions and by dealers (images are not to scale).

WORKERS – mummiform; green or blue glazed faience (the latter was the original colour); details are added in black; wears a plain tripartite wig; breasts are modelled in relief below the front lappets of the wig; the face is quite well modelled and oval in shape; ears protrude in the front of the lappets of the wig; the arms are crossed right over left above the waist; clenched hands hold a pair of hoes that are modelled in raised relief and painted; a rectangular-shaped basket without outline is modelled in raised relief below the rear lappet of the wig and has diamond-hatched patterning that is added in black; vertical column of a painted hieroglyphic inscription on the front without framing lines.
10.0–10.5 cm in height.

Arizona (ASU 72_293).³ ①

Birmingham (BIMAG 1989A61).⁴

Brussels (MRAH E.03335).⁵ ②

Carmarthen (CM 75.692 & 75.693).⁶ ③ ④

Liverpool (GM E.1750; WM 58.54.6, 58.54.8, 58.54.9, 58.54.11–58.54.13 & 58.54.15 ⑤–⑪).⁷

London (BM EA 71183).⁸ ⑫

Manchester (MM 9858).⁹ ⑬

Kemehu Collection. ⑭



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OVERSEERS – dress of daily life with a very short projecting triangular-shaped apron that was perhaps added as a modification to a worker *shabti*; light blue (rare, but the original colour) or green glazed faience; details are added in black; wears a plain tripartite wig, the back of which lacks definition; breasts are faintly modelled in relief below the front lappets of the wig; the face is simply modelled and round in shape; the arms are crossed right over left above the waist and the clenched hands hold a pair of hoes instead of a whip usually associated with ‘overseer’ *shabtis*; a vertical column of a painted hieroglyphic inscription is added on the front of the legs without framing lines.

9.9–10.1 cm in height.

Brussels (MRAH E.03336).¹⁰ ①

Carmarthen (CM 75.704).¹¹ ②

Liverpool (WM 58.54.7).¹² ③

Manchester (MM 9856).¹³ ④

Catawiki auction 2020.



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GJ with the exceptions of **WORKERS**: Arizona = courtesy of Arizona State University; Brussels = courtesy of the Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire; London = courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum. **OVERSEERS**: Brussels = courtesy of the Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire

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11. Delaney, C. (ed.), *"A son to Luxor's sand": a commemorative exhibition of Egyptian art from the collections of the British Museum and Carmarthen* (Aberystwyth, 1986), p. 32, with illustration on p. 30 [no. 98].
12. Janes, G., *The Shabti Collections 6 – A selection from World Museum, Liverpool* (Lymm, 2016), pp. 220–222 [no. 96b].
13. Janes, G., *The Shabti Collections 5 – A selection from the Manchester Museum* (Lymm, 2012), p. 187 [no. 99a].

Abbreviations

ASU	State University (Arizona).
BIMAG	Museum & Art Gallery (Birmingham).
BM	The British Museum (London).
CM	Carmarthen Museum (Wales).
GM	The Garstang Museum (Liverpool).
MM	The Manchester Museum (England).
MRAH	Musée Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire (Brussels).
WM	World Museum (Liverpool).

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