

DATABASES FOR SHABTIS OF THE THIRD INTERMEDIATE PERIOD (c. 1069-656 BC)

Hor-pen-Iset

Hr-pn-ḥs.t



Third Intermediate Period, 22nd Dynasty

From Abydos, North Cemeteries, Cemetery E, tomb 269



Hor-pen-Iset

Faience, green glaze, details added in black

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From Abydos, North Cemeteries, Cemetery E, tomb 269

H. 12.6 cm. W. 4.4 cm. D. 3.9 cm.

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A mummiform *shabti* wearing a plain tripartite wig. A pair of small breasts are faintly modelled in raised relief below the front lappets. The hands meet above the waist and clenched hands hold a pair of hoes that are added in black paint. Notably, the hoes on the *shabtis* for this specific owner are quite small and always shown at an atypical angle – halfway down the arms rather than in front of the shoulders. This distinctive iconography appears unique to this owner. A simply outlined basket with carrying straps is added in black on the back of the *shabti*. The basket slants to the left. The face is comparatively small, triangular, and poorly defined. While the eyes are gently modelled rather than painted, the faintly defined ears protrude in the front of the lappets of the wig. The back of the *shabti* is almost flat and the feet, which are quite voluminous, curve forwards. In profile, the *shabti* is quite bulky. Its back is nearly flat, and the feet curve forward. A single vertical column of painted, mostly outlined hieroglyphs on the front identifies the owner as Hor-pen-Iset.¹

Shabtis for Hor-pen-Iset are recorded from Abydos, discovered during John Garstang's 1900 excavations.² The faience used for these figures is remarkably friable, and the

objects themselves are quite heavy. Consequently, many surviving examples in museum collections are repaired or fragmentary. For instance, the example in the Kemehu Collection features two firing cracks across the torso and is repaired at the neck.

Only three 'overseer' *shabtis* are currently known for this owner. They are highly unusual because the knee-length aprons, representing the dress of daily life, do not protrude into the standard tapering triangle that is typical of such figures. Instead, the lower edge of the apron is clearly defined and slants gently towards the nearly flat back of the figure. The lower legs are distinctly modelled and the voluminous feet curve forward. Two of the known examples carry what appears to be a small yoke at or just below neck height, with a small adze or hoe suspended from the right end. The 'overseer' *shabtis* are clearly made in their own distinct mould(s) rather than being modified from worker *shabtis*, which was the common practice for *shabtis* of other owners.

Inscription



Wsir Hr-pn-3s.t

The Osiris, Hor-pen-Iset.

Typology and database of parallel *shabtis* for Hor-pen-Iset

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; blue–green glazed faience (blue was the original colour); details are added in black; wear a plain tripartite wig; breasts are faintly suggested below the front lappets; the arms meet at the waist and clenched hands hold a pair of small hoes that are added in black; the detail on one example to be found in Liverpool (WM 58.32.7) appears to show a broad-bladed hoe being held in the right hand and a narrow-bladed in the left; a rectangular-shaped basket is outlined in black on the back; carrying straps are either indicated as single or double lines; the face is small and triangular in shape and with faintly modelled details of the eyes, eyebrows (extremely faint), nose and mouth; very faintly defined ears protrude in the front of the lappets of the wig; a vertical column of a painted hieroglyphic inscription on the front of the *shabti* names the owner as Hor-pen-Iset; the hieroglyphs are mostly shown in outline.

c. 11.7–12.6 cm in height.

Aberdeen (ABDUA 23124).³ ①

Batley (KLMUS 966.104).⁴ ②

Bristol (H3072 & H3073).⁵ ③ ④

Burnley (TH EG 433?).⁶

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Glasgow (GLAHM D 1964.39).⁷ ⑥

Liverpool (GM E.1738;⁸ WM 24.9.00.154 – gift of the ERA in 1900, 52.55.134, 58.32.7 & 58.32.21).⁹ ⑦–⑩

London (BM EA 50109 – no recorded provenance, presented by the EEF in 1911 and from their excavations, & 71073 – unidentified);¹⁰ ⑪ ⑫ UC 40431, 40432, 40491 & 40492).¹¹ ⑬–⑯

Manchester (MM 1252? – recorded as coming from Abydos).¹² ⑰

Oxford (ASH E.3595).¹³ ⑱

South Hadley (MHC 1910.8.8.A.K – the painted inscription and details are considered to be modern!).¹⁴ ⑲

Kemehu Collection.²⁰



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OVERSEERS – light blue–green glazed faience (blue was the original colour); details are added in black; wear the dress of daily life with an knee–length apron; wear a plain tripartite wig; the face is triangular in shape and simply modelled; the eyes and eyebrows are indicated in the modelling but there is no suggestion that were once highlighted in black paint; very faintly defined ears protrude in the front of the lappets of the wig; the right arm is held across the chest and the clenched hand holds a whip that is modelled in relief and painted black; the left arm hangs down by the side of the body; he legs are indicated in the modelling; the back has a horizontal yoke added in black from which a mystery object is suspended; some examples carry a basket on the back; the feet are gently curved in profile and rest upon a crudely modelled integral base, which is not evident on worker *shabtis*; a vertical column of a painted hieroglyphic inscription extending down the upper body and onto the apron names the owner as Hor–pen–Iset. c. 11.5–12.7 cm in height.

Liverpool (WM 52.55.151 & 58.32.11).¹⁵ ① ②

London (BM EA 71079 – not fully identified, only read as Hor).¹⁶ ③



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Photo credits:

GJ with the exceptions of **WORKERS**: London = courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum and courtesy of the Petrie Museum of Egyptian and Sudanese Archaeology, UCL; South Hadley = © Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Massachusetts. **OVERSEERS**: London = courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum and courtesy of the Petrie Museum of Egyptian and Sudanese Archaeology.

1. Ranke H., *Die Ägyptischen Personennamen* (Glückstadt, 1935), PN I p. 247 (8) (Hor-pa-en-Iset).
2. Garstang, J., *El Arábah: A cemetery of the Middle Kingdom; Survey of the Old Kingdom temenos; Graffiti from the Temple of Sety* (London, 1901), p. 43.
3. Communication with Dr. Abeer Eladany. See also the website of the University of Aberdeen: <https://calm.abdn.ac.uk/museums/>
4. Communication with Katina Bill and Joseph Murray.
5. Communication with Sue Giles. See the website of Bristol Museums: <http://museums.bristol.gov.uk/index.php>
6. Communication with Mike Townshead.
7. Communication with Dr. Angela MacDonald. See the website of the University of Glasgow: <https://www.gla.ac.uk/collections/#/>
8. Communication with Dr. Glenn Godenho.
9. Bienkowski, P. & Southworth, E., *Egyptian Antiquities in the Liverpool Museum I: A list of the provenanced objects* (Warminster, 1986), pp. 11–12; Janes, G., *The Shabti Collections 6 – A selection from World Museum, Liverpool* (Lymm, 2016), pp. 316–319 [nos. 152b & d]. See also the website of World Museum: <https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/>
10. See the website of the British Museum: <https://www.britishmuseum.org/>
11. See the website of the Petrie Museum of Egyptian and Sudanese Archaeology: <https://collections.ucl.ac.uk/>
12. Janes, G., *The Shabti Collections 5 – A selection from the Manchester Museum* (Lymm, 2012), p. 265 [no. 148].
13. Communication with Dr. Helen Whitehouse and Dr. Liam McNamara.
14. See the website of Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, South Hadley, Massachusetts: https://museums.fivecolleges.edu/detail.php?t=objects&type=ext&id_number=MH+1910.8.8.A.K
15. Bienkowski, P. & Southworth, E., *Egyptian Antiquities in the Liverpool Museum I: A list of the provenanced objects* (Warminster, 1986), pp. 11–12; Janes, G., *The Shabti Collections 6 – A selection from World Museum, Liverpool* (Lymm, 2016), pp. 316–319 [nos. 152a, b, d & f]. See also the website of World Museum: <https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/>
16. See the website of the British Museum: <https://www.britishmuseum.org/>

Abbreviations

ABDUA	University of Aberdeen, Human Culture Collection.
ASH	Ashmolean Museum (Oxford).
BM	The British Museum (London).
EEF	Egyptian Exploration Fund.
ERA	Egypt Research Account.
GLAHM	The Hunterian Museum and Art Gallery, Glasgow.
GM	The Garstang Museum (Liverpool).
KLMUS	Kirklees Museums and Galleries.
MHC	Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, South Hadley, Massachusetts.
MM	The Manchester Museum (England).
TH	Towneley Hall (Burnley, England).
UC	University College, London (Petrie Museum of Egyptian and Sudanese Archaeology).
WM	World Museum (Liverpool).

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