

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

Shak-sha

š3k-š3



Third Intermediate Period, 22nd Dynasty
From Abydos, North Cemeteries, Cemetery E



Shak-sha

Faience, blue/green glaze, details added in black

Third Intermediate Period, 22nd Dynasty

From Abydos, North Cemeteries, Cemetery E

H. 12.3 cm. W. 8.1 cm. D. 5.2 cm.

ex Hugh Stanley Russell (1924-2000) Collection; ex Julian Bird (1959-2014) Collection (London)

Published: Bonhams 2005, part of lot 17



The upper part of a mummiform *shabti* wearing a plain tripartite wig with a *seshed* headband that is neatly tied at the back being added in black. The arms are very boldly modelled although they are quite thin. They are crossed right over left on the chest. The hands are clenched and they hold a pair of small hoes that are modelled in low relief and painted black. The face is round in shape. The details a little abraded. The nose is quite large and the mouth has lips that are pushed forwards with a tense smile. The eyes with eyebrows are painted black. The ears are faintly shown in the modelling and protrude in front of the lappets of the wig. A trapezoidal-shaped basket with square-hatched detail and shoulder straps that emerge below the rear lappet of the wig is painted on the back. Small loops are evident in the corners of the basket. A vertical column of a painted hieroglyphic inscription with framing lines open at the top on the front of the *shabti* is mostly missing because the torso and legs of the *shabti* are lost. When compared to known parallel *shabtis*, it is evident that this is a *shabti* for Shak-sha.¹

Shabtis for Shak-sha are the tallest examples to be found for any owner during the Third Intermediate Period. With an

average height of around 20 cm, which is twice the normal size for that time, they must have formed an impressive group, not in terms of their workmanship, but because of their sheer size. Many of the surviving examples (see the following database) are broken or fragmentary. This is perhaps a result of the *shabtis* being rather unwieldy because of their size and therefore potentially fragile as opposed to being deliberately mutilated. There are no *shabti*-boxes known for Shak-sha or any other items of funerary equipment and thus this owner is only known from his *shabtis*.

John Garstang, who excavated at Abydos (El Arábah) North Cemeteries, Cemetery E in 1899–1900, published a photo of a *shabti* for Shak-sha in the Research Account in 1901.² Unfortunately he gives no information about the *shabti*, no tomb number for example, just the illustration. Stephan Snape published two fragmentary examples that were excavated by Garstang who returned to Abydos in 1908. These are given the tomb number 584.³ There are no surviving records showing the exact location of the tomb or details about its construction. Snape comments that the '1908 season is by far the most poorly



Fig. 1. The *shabti* for Shak-sha illustrated by Garstang.
(Garstang, J., *El Arábu: A cemetery of the Middle Kingdom; Survey of the Old Kingdom temenos; Graffiti from the Temple of Sety* (London, 1901), pl. XIV).

documented of the four worked at Abydos.⁴ Apart from an alabaster inlaid eye and some pottery, no other material is recorded from this tomb. These objects are to be found in the Garstang Museum in Liverpool (for the *shabtis*, see the following database).

Many of the *shabtis* to be found in museum collections were allocated by the Egyptian Research Account from the 1899–1900 excavations at Abydos. This must confirm their provenance and date of excavation (see Fig. 2 for a general plan of the excavations).

It is worth mentioning a *shabti* that is to be found in Leiden

(RMO H** 19 – see the following database) that was purchased by the RMO in June 1830 from Colonel J. E. Humbert, a Colonel and Military Engineer who, on his Third Mission in 1826–1830, acquired antiquities in Carthage, Italy, Tunisia and Egypt. This early date is something of a mystery in view of Garstang's excavations at Abydos regarding the *shabtis* for Shak-sha that were in 1899–1900 and 1908. Did Humbert buy the *shabti* from a dealer when he was in Egypt? Did the dealer find the *shabti* lying in the sands at Abydos or could the Humbert provenance be erroneous?

Inscription



Wsir [Šk-š3 m3^c-hrw]

The Osiris, [Shak-sha, justified].

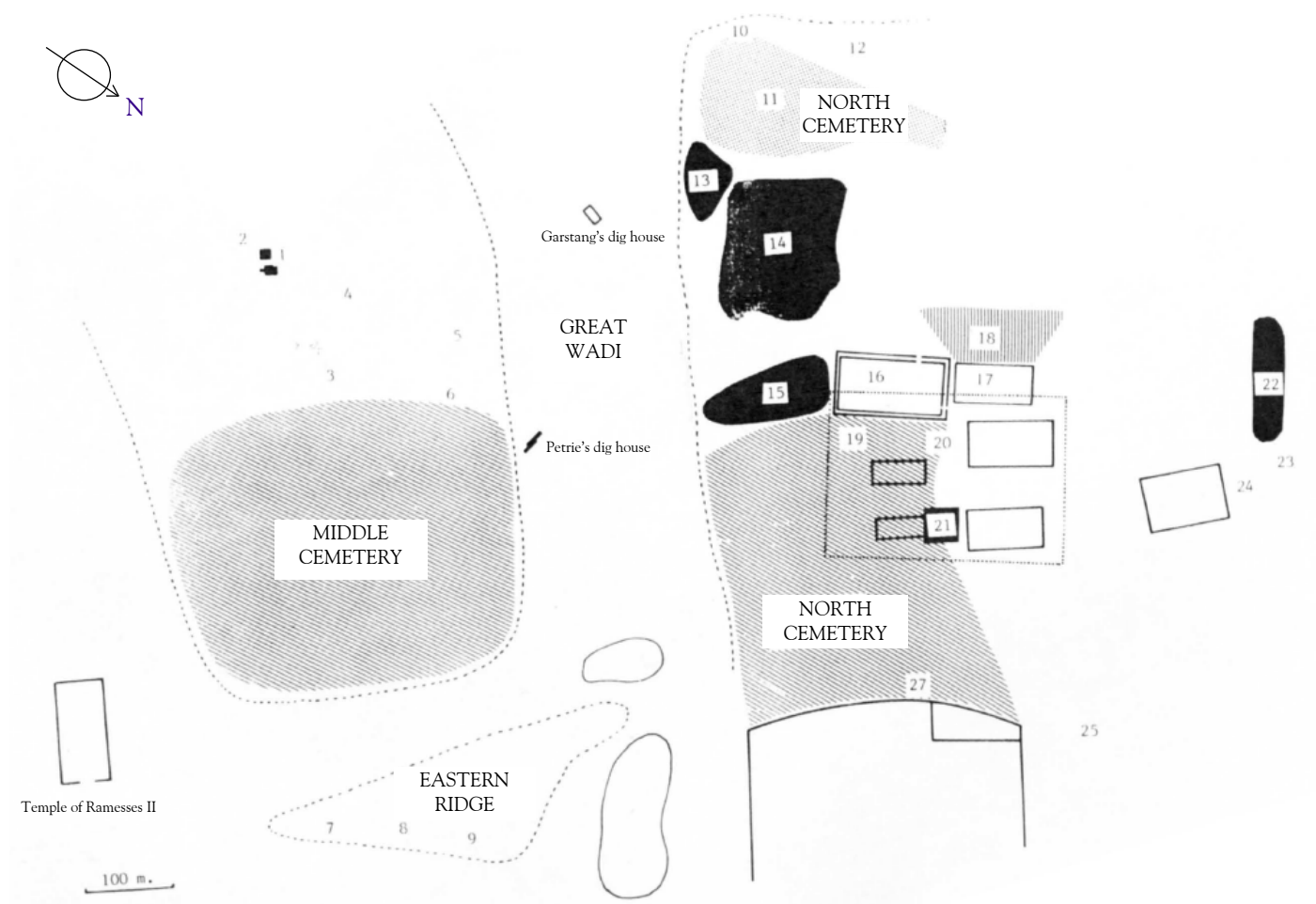


Fig. 2. Plan of the excavations in the cemeteries at Abydos.
(After Snape, S., *Mortuary Assemblages from Abydos*, 2 vols. (Thesis, Liverpool, 1986 – unpublished), vol. 1, Figs. 1 & 2, 10).

- 1 = Egypt Exploration Fund Southern Dig House, with the 'Well and Dog Hypogeum' to the east of it
- 2 = Frankfort excavations
- 3 = Amélineau excavation '5' and '6'
- 4 = Frankfort excavations
- 5 = Peet Cemetery 'E'
- 6 = Petrie Cemetery 'G'
- 7 = Ayrton and Loat Cemetery 'F'
- 8 = Peet Cemetery 'T'
- 9 = Peet Cemetery 'R'
- 10 = Neferhotep Stela (Mace and Randall-MacIver excavations)
- 11 = Mace and Randall-MacIver Cemetery 'D'
- 12 = Amélineau excavations
- 13 = Peet Cemeteries 'X', 'B', 'C', and 'F'
- 14 = Garstang Cemetery 'E'
- 15 = Peet Cemeteries 'O', 'W', and 'Z'
- 16 = Currelly Cemetery 'w'
- 17 = Currelly Cemetery 'm'
- 18 = Currelly Cemetery 'v'
- 19 = Peet Cemetery 'Y'
- 20 = Amélineau excavations '3'
- 21 = Peet Cemetery 'S'
- 22 = Peet Cemeteries 'K', 'L', and 'N'
- 23 = Amélineau excavations '4', "es-Zein"
- 24 = Peet Cemetery 'M'
- 25 = Amélineau excavations '1'
- 26 = Peet Cemetery 'D'
- 27 = Pennsylvania/Yale excavations

Typology and database of parallel *shabtis* for Shak-sha

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; light or mid blue/green glazed faience; details are added in black; wear a plain tripartite wig with a *seshed* headband that is worn high on the head and is tied at the back; the face is oval in shape; the nose is large and bulbous and the mouth is small and gently smiling; the eyes and eyebrows are large and boldly outlined and with pupils added in black; the ears are only faintly modelled and protrude in the front of the lappets of the wig; the arms are very thin and crossed right over left above the waist; clenched hands hold a pair of small hoes that are modelled in raised relief and highlighted in black; one example has the hoes neatly outlined in black; a square-hatched trapezoidal or rectangular-shaped (rare) basket is carried in the centre of back and has carrying straps at the upper corners; one parallel example has two square baskets, one behind each shoulder and with a single carrying strap for each; some baskets have a gently curved line above the basket that could indicate the upper limit the mound of seeds contained within(?); a vertical column of a painted hieroglyphic inscription is added in black with framing lines; the owner is named as Shak-sha.
c. 19.0–21.4 cm in height.

Batley (KLMUS 966–15 & 966–117).⁵ ① ②
Birmingham (BIMAG 1989A70 – upper half only).⁶
Blackburn (BLMAG 99).⁷ ③
Bolton (BOLMG 1900.54.118 – from Abydos).⁸ ④
Burnley (Towneley Hall – EG 127).⁹ ⑤
Cambridge (FWM E.SU.127 & E.SU.128 – from Abydos;¹⁰ ⑥ ⑦
MAA 1923.313A).¹¹ ⑧
Chiddingstone Castle (EDECC 01.0296).¹² ⑨
Leiden (RMO H** 19 – purchased in 1830(?) from Colonel J. E. Humbert).¹³ ⑩
Liverpool (WM 24.9.00.174;¹⁴ ⑪ GM E.1872 & E.1873 – from Abydos, upper parts only).¹⁵
London (BM 71233 & 71234 ⑫ ⑬; ¹⁶ UC 39946 ⑭, 40401 – badly repaired with a wrongly proportioned mid-torso section (digitally reconstructed by GJ), ⑮ 40451, 40482–40489 ⑯–⑳ & 40490a – feet only).¹⁷
Manchester (MM 1313 & 8104).¹⁸ ㉑–㉒
Oxford (ASH E.3579 – from Abydos).¹⁹ ㉓
Philadelphia (PUM E14497 & 14498 – from Abydos).²⁰ ㉔–㉕
Preston (PRSMG A1558.2).²¹ ㉖
Stoke-on-Trent (STKMG number unknown).²² ㉗

Toronto (ROM 910.23.17).²³ ㉘
Kemehu Collection. ㉙
Memphis Collection (NH189 – ex US private collection & NH??? – ex Sotheby's 1992, lot 556 and Christie's 1994, lot 91 – via Mieke Zilverberg.²⁴ ㉚ ㉛
Former Ogdon collection (Buenos Aires) [EFE.01].²⁵
Bonhams 1993, lot 6 – upper half of two examples & lot 7 – upper half of two examples. Complete examples are mentioned in the descriptions of both lots but their sizes (14 cm and 10.7 cm) suggests that these are *shabtis* for different owners.
Bonhams 2002, lot 410 – upper half only – previously sold by Bonhams 1993, part of lot 6. ㉜
Christie's 1981, part of lot 309.
Christie's 1982, part of lot 125.
Christie's 1994, lot 182 (head and upper torso only).
Christie's 1994b, lot 91 (see Memphis Collection above).
Cornette de Saint Cyr 2014, lot 110 – previously sold by Christie's 1982, lot 125. ㉝
Sotheby's 1992, lot 556 (see Memphis Collection above).
Puhze 1991, [no. 366]. ㉞





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20



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OVERSEERS – light blue/green glazed faience; details are added in black (faded); wear the dress of daily life with a knee-length triangular projecting apron; wear a short bag wig with a *seshed* headband that is worn high on the head and tied at the back; the face is square in shape and fairly well-modelled; the nose is large and bulbous and the mouth is small; the eyes are boldly outlined and with eyebrows neatly added; the left arm hangs by the side of the body; the right arm is folded across the lower chest and the clenched hand holds a whip that is faintly modelled in relief and held in front of the left shoulder; a vertical column of a painted hieroglyphic inscription with framing lines is written on the apron; the owner is named as Shak-sha.
c. 19.8 cm in height.

London (UC 40452). ①
Bergé 2013, lot 56. ②



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GJ with the exceptions of **WORKERS**: Bolton = Anthony Donohue; Leiden = © Rijksmuseum van Oudheden; London = courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum and courtesy of The Petrie Museum of Egyptian and Sudanese Archaeology, UCL; Philadelphia = courtesy of the Penn Museum; Toronto = © Royal Ontario Museum; Memphis Collection = courtesy of NH; Bonhams = © Bonhams, London; Cornette de Saint Cyr = © Cornette de Saint Cyr, Paris; Puhze = © Günter Puhze; Zilverberg = © Mieke Zilverberg. **OVERSEERS**: London = courtesy of the Petrie Museum of Egyptian and Sudanese Archaeology, UCL; Bergé = © Pierre Bergé, Paris.

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Abbreviations

AA	<i>Aegyptus Antiquus</i> (Buenos Aires, Argentina).
ASH	Ashmolean Museum (Oxford).
BIMAG	Museum & Art Gallery (Birmingham).
BLMAG	Museum & Art Gallery (Blackburn).
BM	The British Museum, London.
BOLMG	Bolton Museum & Art Gallery (Bolton).
FWM	Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.
GM	The Garstang Museum (Liverpool).
MAA	Museum of Archaeology & Anthropology (University of Cambridge).
PRSMG	Museum and Art Gallery – The Harris (Preston).
PUM	The University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (Philadelphia).
RMO	Rijksmuseum van Oudheden (Leiden).
ROM	Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto.
STKMG	Stoke-on-Trent Museum & Art Gallery (Hanley, England).
TH	Towneley Hall, (Burnley, England).
UC	University College, London (Petrie Museum of Egyptian and Sudanese Archaeology).
WM	World Museum (Liverpool).
ZÄS	<i>Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde</i> (Berlin).

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