



Shabti of Thent-Hor, Singer of Amun

Date

c. 1070-656 B.C.E.

Medium

Red clay with black pigment

Description

In the Egyptian afterlife, everyone was expected to work in the Field of Reeds (or A'aru) for Osiris, the god of death. Shabtis first began appearing in tombs of the Middle Kingdom (ca. 2040 – 1782 B.C.E.), likely evolving from the wooden models of servants and workers that were included in Old and Middle Kingdom burials. At first, they were only mummiiform and most were placed in their own coffins. Most remained uninscribed, but some included the name of their owners or fractions of the shabti spell from Chapter 6 of the Book of the Dead. By the New Kingdom, shabtis had come to personify the deceased and perform labor on their behalf in the A'aru. They were made of predominantly clay and faience, and painted with agricultural implements such as sickles, hoes, baskets, and brick molds for working in the A'aru. Most tombs contain at least a few shabtis. Over time, it became more common to include 365 worker shabtis (one for each day of the year) and 36 overseers (one for every 10 worker shabtis) in wealthier tombs, totaling 401. This Third Intermediate Period shabti (ca. 1070 – 656 B.C.E.) was excavated from Tomb 32 of Cemetery D in Abydos sometime between 1899 – 1902, and donated to the College by William C. Winslow in 1902. It has been attributed to Thent-Hor, Singer of Amun, and belongs to a larger set that likely numbered around 401; the Wellin possesses over a dozen of Thent-Hor's shabtis. Unfortunately, little is known about Thent-Hor, but she must have been a figure of relative importance in Abydos given her title, role, and the number of shabtis that have been found in connection to her. (Written by Kayley Boddy '22)

Catalogue card from 1960s: [One of] "4 clay ushabtis of Thent-Hor, Singer of Amen. Egyptian, XX-XXVth Dyns. Gift of: W. C. Winslow, '62. Buff clay; red wash; black paint on wig, eyes, columnar inscription. Hands modelled, crossed. Backs rounded." cf. No. 50 "Rev. Dr. William C. Winslow, '62, in behalf of the Egypt Exploration Fund, has presented to the college a number of Ushabtis, or images, which were found in the course of excavations at Abydos in Egypt. These images are less than a span in length, and some are glazed and some of un-glazed clay. One is certified as being of the XXX Dynasty, and another is characterized as "Thent-Hor Singer of Amen". (SOURCE: Hamilton Literary Magazine, "Alumniana," (March 1902), p. 314) Excavated at Cemetery D at Abydos between 1899-1900 by Arthur Cruttenden Mace (1874-1928) for the Egypt Exploration Fund, London. Discovered in Tomb no. 32: "XIXth-XXth Dyn : re-used in XXth-XXVth Dyn. Number of painted pottery canopies, and glaze and pottery ushabtis, giving names Thent-hor, Nu-ast, Hor-iu, Hent-mer, Nesi-ny, Ankh-s-ast, Pa-neter-hon, Pa-nekht, Hor-ankh, Mer-su-tef, Un-nefer, Hemt-neter, S-ankh-sahti, Hent-yit; glaze pectorals, rings, scarabs and amulets; small ivory Hathor figure, two red porphyry heart-amulets, etc. " (SOURCE: David Randall-MacIver, Arthur Cruttenden Mace, Francis Llewellyn Griffith, EL AMRAH AND ABYDOS, 1899-1901 (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1902), p. 99)

Dimensions

Overall: 3 1/2 x 1 1/4 in. (8.9 x 3.2 cm)