

## ***Kneeling Statue of Wahibre Offering a Shrine*** **The British Museum**

From near Lake Mareotis in the north-west Delta, Egypt  
26th Dynasty, about 530 BC

**Highly polished, black basalt statue**



Wahibre was governor of the Western Delta during the Twenty-sixth Dynasty. That he could afford to set up a statue of this quality indicates his importance.

The statue was probably set up in a temple, and shows Wahibre demonstrating his piety. He holds up a *naos*(shrine) containing a figure of the god Osiris. By making such an offering, Wahibre would expect to share in the generosity and good fortune of the god. The stone is highly polished and yet sparsely decorated, which perhaps emphasizes the hardness of the black basalt.

In terms of style, the statue shows many characteristic features of art of the Late Period (661-332 BC). For example, Wahibre's face exhibits idealised features of a new type, which may seem rather bland to us. Egyptologists often associate this type of 'idealising' with the post-Persian period (after 332 BC), but in this case the statue's date is not in doubt.

G. Robins, *The art of ancient Egypt* (London, The British Museum Press, 1997)