

Quartzite Statue of Peshuper The British Museum

Probably from Karnak, Thebes, Egypt
25th Dynasty, about 750-700 BC

Scribe of 'The Divine Adoratrice Amenirdis'



Peshuper adopts one of the classic poses of an Egyptian scribe, seated at work with a papyrus spread over his lap. The two cakes of ink that form the central part of a scribal palette are visible on his left shoulder.

On his right arm is written the cartouche of his patroness, the 'Divine Adoratrice Amenirdis'. These women, also known as 'god's wives', became the focus of the cult of Amun in Thebes during the Third Intermediate Period (about 1070-661 BC), as the male high priests were becoming increasingly involved in the political dealings of the time. A whole bureaucracy grew up around the divine adoratrices, and many of these officials were to build some of the largest tombs ever seen in Egypt.

The statue probably came, like others of this official, from a chapel in the temple enclosure of Karnak, but we cannot be certain.

The statue is an excellent example of how the artists of the Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth Dynasties (about 747-525 BC) adopted styles from earlier eras; the wig is in the style of the Ramesside period, and the pose had been in use from the Old Kingdom (about 2613-2160 BC). The two rolls of fat in Peshuper's abdomen are a sign of his prosperity.

Source URL: http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/aes/q/quartzite_statue_of_peshuper.aspx
Saylor URL: <http://www.saylor.org/courses/arth201>

T.G.H. James, 'Le prétendu "sanctuaire de Karnak" selon Budge', *Bulletin de la société français*, 75 (1976), pp. 7-30

T.G.H. James and W.V. Davies, *Egyptian sculpture*(London, The British Museum Press, 1983)

E.R. Russmann, *Eternal Egypt: masterworks of*(University of California Press, 2001)

R. Parkinson, *Cracking codes: the Rosetta St* (London, The British Museum Press, 1999)

J. Leclant, *Enquêtes sur les sacerdoce*s et (Cairo, 1954)

T.G.H. James, *Ancient Egypt: the land and it* (London, 1988)