EGYPTIAN ART IN THE AGE OF THE PYRAMIDS

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between two figures, probably a goddess and the male personification of a province, or nome, of Egypt. The Boston fragment, which is carved in a remarkable style, comes from the valley temple of Menkaure. It belongs to an extraordinary series of statues representing the pharaoh in the company of the goddess Hathor and a male or female nome deity, recognizable by the emblem worn on the head. This theme was repeated in statues of other Old Kingdom sovereigns. Four admirable triads with Menkaure have been found intact at Giza: three of them, in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, depict the king standing with Hathor on his right and on his left, respectively, the nomes of Thebes (JE 40678), Cynopolis (JE 40679), and Diospolis Parva (JE 46499; cat. no. 68); the fourth triad, in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (09.200), is dominated by a representation of Hathor seated between two standing figures, the king on her left and the goddess of the Hare nome on her right. This group to which this head belongs is distinguished by the splendid modeling of the goddess's body; she is standing to the right of the king and holding his hand. The king is also depicted standing, dressed in a shendyt kilt with fine pleats. The third figure has his arm around the king's shoulders. The subtle treatment of this male figure's bones and musculature, like the treatment of Menkaure's head, attests to the sense for sculptural form attributed to the workshop of Sculptor B (see introduction to cat. nos. 56-63).

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pattern can be found in some royal reliefs, such as the hunting scene of King Sahure (cat. no. 112).

Most of the face and the right side of the head are in excellent condition, but the left ear has been damaged, and a large section of the left side of the head is missing. The short-cropped hair and the shape of a break at the back of the king's head encourage a comparison between this piece and the fragmentary statuette of King Neferefre discovered in his funerary complex at Abusir (Egyptian Museum, Cairo, JE 98171). The statuette depicts Neferefre seated, with a falcon behind his head. In a better-known example of this pose, a life-size gneiss statue of King Khafre (fig. 28), the falcon stands on the high back of the throne and actually peers over the king's head, but in the Neferefre example the bird perches on the king's shoulders and its eyes are level with the middle of the pharaoh's head. It is at least possible that the present head came from a similar statue. Since three fragments of a lifesize Egyptian alabaster statue showing a falcon at the back of a royal head adorned with a nemes headcloth (cat. no. 57) were found just east of the pyramid temple of Khufu, and since the well-known Khafre statue was discovered in that king's valley temple, it is likely that Menkaure would have had a similar type of statue in his mortuary complex at Giza. Since three fragments of a lifesize Egyptian alabaster statue showing a falcon at the back of a royal head adorned with a nemes headcloth (cat. no. 57) were found just east of the pyramid temple of Khufu, and since the well-known Khafre statue was discovered in that king's valley temple, it is likely that Menkaure would have had a similar type of statue in his mortuary complex at Giza.

4. This piece is discussed in Johnson 1990, p. 108, figs. 195-97. It is the only known example of a uraeus with a complete head in Old Kingdom statuary; it is also the earliest instance in which the uraeus appears on a royal head that is not adorned with a nemes headcloth.

5. I would describe these curves as compressed rather than semicompressed, as does Johnson (ibid.).

6. Verner 1985a, pls. 45-47; Verner 1994a, pp. 143-45, ills. For another fragmentary statue of the same type, see Verner 1985a, pl. 44.

7. Found in debris above mastaba G 7102. See Smith 1946, p. 20, pl. 5a.

8. For another opinion about this head, see Lacovara 1995, p. 126, where the author proposes that it has been recarved.

**Provenance:** Giza, valley temple of Menkaure, Reisner excavation, 1909

**Bibliography:** Reisner 1931, p. 112, pls. 52, 53; Smith 1960, pp. 46, 51, fig. 27; Godron 1964, pp. 59-61; Lacovara 1995, pp. 126-27, ills.