

The shabtis of the King's Son of Kush

Hori



By Niek de Haan

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1. Introduction

1.1 *Introduction to this study*

This study provides an overview of the shabtis for the King's son of Kush Hori. In addition to the published examples I added the shabtis I have come across in the world. I will start off with a short introduction of the ancient owner Hori and describe his shabtis in general. In the following chapters you will find the museum parallels (chapter 2) and the privately owned parallels (chapter 3).

1.2 *Who was Hori?*

Hori I, son of Kama from Bubastis, was the Viceroy of the southern land of Kush (Nubia) under the pharaohs Ramesses III and IV. He pursued a successful military career and was appreciated for it by the ruling pharaohs. Among Hori's other titles were Overseer of the Gold Lands of Amen-Re and King's scribe. He married the chantress of Mehyt, Khayt. Their son, Hori II held the same important governorship under pharao Setnakhte. Hori I's family tomb was located at Tell Basta and was officially excavated in 1944, although being plundered in antiquity. Tomb of Hori in situ:



1.3 Description of the shabtis

The shabtis are mummiform, the faience has a rare white glaze and the details are in purple/brown, wearing a tripartite wig, adorned with a broad usekh collar and wrist bracelets, holding agricultural implements in each hand, seed sacks over both shoulders, brick mold and yoke and water pots on back and a column of hieroglyphic inscriptions on front: "The illuminated, the Osiris, the King's son of Kush, the scribe, Hori". On some his titles are omitted, especially the scribe's title.

It is unclear how many shabtis were originally buried in Tell Basta for Hori as the tomb had been plundered in antiquity. The shabtis for Hori were found scattered around and consisted of 3 types of shabtis. One was from quartz (10 centimeters in height), five large ones of alabaster (between 17 and 29 centimeters) and nine of faience. The faience shabtis vary in size around 11 cm.



Shabtis found in the tomb of Hori



Hori shabtis, quartz and alabaster

These are all in Cairo museum with inventory numbers. It is unclear how and when the other shabtis in this publication came onto the market. There is evidence that this must have been in the 1950's or earlier.

The design of the necklaces seem to be slightly different on each shabti. Was that deliberate to show the wealth and thus importance of the owner or just the artist who liked variation? Or both?



Example of variations of the necklaces on the Hori shabtis

Very interesting is the variety of implements carried by the shabtis for this owner. Again there is a variation in type of implements and / or the location on the shabti.



Example of variations of the implements (waterpots, seedbag and jug?)

Finally, very rare or perhaps unique on the shabtis of Hori is that the broad usekh collar extends to above the hoe implements and in some cases run down to the side of the shabti:



Example of broad usekh collar

Another interesting aspect is the similarity in the iconography with the shabtis of his wife, the Chantress of Mehyt, Khayt. Presumably another family member was Horemheb, which also had similar shabtis.



Hori, Khayt and Horemheb, all from the same workshop

From Horemheb only one example is known (© Glenn Janes, *Shabtis – a private view*, number 19 page 44), with the less elaborate necklace, similar to some of the Hori shabtis. The shabtis of Khayt all seem to have the more elaborate necklace. For the rest are the shabtis similar in size and iconography. On the shabtis of Hori the end of the lappets seem deliberately left unpainted, whilst they are always painted till the end by those of Khayt.

2. Museum pieces

On the following pages an overview is provided of the museum pieces which are currently part of their respective collections.

The following information is provided for each piece:

- Location:** The city in which the museum is located is mentioned as well as the name of the museum.
- Published:** If the museum piece is published in a book or on the internet the name of the publication, author and the relevant page number is mentioned.
- Inventory nb** The inventory number is mentioned if known.
- Provenance:** For as far as available the provenance of the piece is described, detailing the previous owners prior to the entering into the collection of the museum.
- Height:** The specific height of the shabti is described in centimetres.
- Comments:** Provides the comments of the author to the specific pieces, for example relating to the condition or quality of the object compared to the other parallels.



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1-5: Cairo museum

Published: The first 3 are published by Labib Habachi in Tell Basta. Four examples on display.

Inventory nb In the display cases 7868-7870 and 7703

Provenance: Unknown, probably excavated in Tell Basta

Height: Unknown

Comments: Some damage to these example. On the first one the text continues under the feet.

6: Leiden museum

Published: Schneider, Shabtis, part II, 3.3.0.5.

Inventory nb F 1970/1.1

Provenance: Art market (probably Dutch dealer Moger who had a group for sale around 1970).

Height: 11 cm

Comments: Broken and repaired.

3. Private collections pieces and unknown current location

On the following pages an overview is provided of the examples which are currently in private collections around the world.

The following information is provided for each piece:

- Owner:** The name of the current collector/collection. In case this is known the identity of the collector is often protected by using initials only.
- Published:** If the private collection piece is published in a book or on the internet the name of the publication, author and the relevant page number is mentioned.
- Provenance:** For as far as available the provenance of the piece is described, detailing the previous owners prior to the entering into the collection of the collector.
- Height:** The specific height of the shabti is described in centimetres.
- Comments:** Provides the comments of the author to the specific pieces, for example relating to the condition or quality of the object compared to the other parallels.



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1-3 Aubert family collection

Published: Aubert, *Statuettes Egyptiennes Chaouabtis Ouchebtis* (Paris, 1974); fig 45 & 47 p. 292 pl. 21

Provenance: Unknown

Height: Between 10.8 and 11 centimeters

Comments: Nice examples with all different necklaces and clear Maat feather on the hoes.

4-5 Amasis collection

Published: No. © Amasis foundation.

Provenance: Ex D. van Dam, ex Moger, the Netherlands

Height: Unknown

Comments: Intact examples.

6 Bouvier collection

Published: No. Exhibited Basel museum in 1999.

Provenance: Acquired by Maurice Bouvier prior to his move from Egypt to Switzerland in 1959

Height: 10.9 CM

Comments: Titles omitted.

7 De Haan collection

Published: No.

Provenance: Ex R. Ellis, New York, acquired in Egypt prior to 1966, sold by Hixenbaugh Ancient Art in 2013 to USA collector to current owner

Height: 11 CM

Comments: Intact.

8 Harer Family trust

Published: G. Scott, Temple, Tomb & Dwelling, Harer Family Trust Collection (Cal State Univ, 1992); pp. 202 - 203 no. 151

Provenance: Unknown

Height: 12.5 CM (according to the publication, doubtful considering the other objects)

Comments: Broken and repaired.

9-11: Sothebys, NYC, 13 Dec 1979

Published: Auction catalogue, lots 82 till 84

Provenance: Unknown

Height: Unknown

Comments: Middle and right example same as Sothebys 5-7-1982, Lots 164 -165.

12 Ede

Published: Charles Ede catalogue 1986, number 51.

Provenance: Unknown

Height: Unknown

Comments: lb amulet on the chest?

Possibly fake example



The above shabti for Hori was auctioned by Drouot in November 1993, lot 99 ex R. Gill. The inscription and the painting of the eyes deviates considerably from the other examples. Without having studied the object in hand it is difficult to know for sure. I have a strong feeling that the object is either heavily restored or a complete fake.

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Below is the complete overview of all the currently known location of the shabtis of Hori.

Between brackets is the inventory number.

Museum pieces

Cairo, Cairo Museum	15
Leiden, RMO	1
Museum totals	<u>16</u>

Private collections

Coll. Aubert	3
Coll. Amasis	2
Coll. Bouvier	1
Coll. NH	1
Coll. Harer Family trust	1
Unknown collections	4
Private collection totals	<u>12</u>
Overall total (museums and private collections)	<u>30</u>

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