



STATUETTE OF OSIRIS

Egypt (Oasis of Siwa)

Late Dynastic Period, early XXVI Dynasty, reign of Amasis, 568-526 BC

Bronze

Height 23,4 cm

Osiris wears the White Crown of Upper Egypt featuring an ostrich feather on each side and a frontal meandering uraeus. He is represented mummiform, his body tightly wrapped in a garment from which his protruding hands rest next to each other on his chest. Osiris holds his symbolic Nekhakha and Heka sceptres (crook and flail), each with recessed grooves which once held inlays of stone, glass paste or precious metal. His facial features are fine with large almond shaped eyes and arched eyebrows recessed for inlays that are now missing. The base is engraved with a hieroglyphic inscription: 'The semenekh-udjat, the second prophet Djedkhonsuiuefankh, son of the second prophet Padjaset'.

Osiris was a complex deity worshipped as a god of fertility. He was also the judge and lord of the dead and the underworld; the 'Lord of Silence' and Khenti-Amentiu meaning 'Formost of the Westeners'. Any pharaoh, who in life was the embodiment of Horus, became Osiris in death, a transformation later extended to all Egyptians which bestowed the opportunity for an independent existence in the next world. This development ensured Osiris a timeless and unbounded popularity which is reflected in the numerous votive images of the god in a variety of stones and metals.

Provenance

Former private collection France, acquired prior to 1972

Literature

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