

MÉLANGES

GAMAL EDDIN MOKHTAR

VOLUME I



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THE KHUFU STATUETTE * : IS IT AN OLD KINGDOM SCULPTURE ?

Zahi HAWASS

INTRODUCTION : DESCRIPTION OF THE OBJECT

In 1903 Sir Flinders Petrie found a small ivory statuette in his excavations within Building K of the Khenti-imnti Temple complex at Abydos¹. The figure, now in the Cairo Museum (J.E. 36143)² stands about 2-1/2 inches high³ and depicts a royal figure seated on a throne. The head, which is somewhat too large with respect to the body, is adorned with the red crown of the Delta connected to the head by the well-placed ear⁴. The face of the king is expressionless; he is wearing a short kilt. The surface of the body is lustrous, his right hand holds a flail over his right breast and his left hand rests on his thigh⁵. The statuette is identified as Khufu, king of the IVth dynasty, by the ka name of the king, inscribed on the right side of the throne (Pl. I).

Petrie immediately dated this statuette to the IVth dynasty on the basis of the name inscribed on the throne, convincing all subsequent archaeologists and art historians of the validity of his assertion and dismissing as superfluous any thought of comparison with IVth dynasty sculpture. I disagree with this dating and believe instead that the statuette was manufactured in the XXVIth dynasty, also known as the Neo-Memphite

* Giza was a very special site for Dr. Gamal Moukhtar. It was under his directorship and with his assistance that we began the campaign to restore the Sphinx (a project which has continued under the aegis of Dr. Ahmed Kadry). Dr. Moukhtar never failed to join us at Giza to welcome famous dignitaries to the pyramids. Since he left the E.A.O., he has remained a very close friend of mine, one whose advice and knowledge of Egyptian monuments and civilization I have always valued.

The idea for this article developed out of a graduate course I took with Dr. Sayed Tawfik,

Dean of the Faculty of Archaeology at Cairo University, in 1979. A paper on this topic was presented to Dr. I.J. Winter at the University of Pennsylvania for a course on Egyptian Art.

¹ Petrie, *Abydos II*, p. 30.

² De Rachewiltz, *Egyptian Art — An Introduction* (London, 1960), p. 59.

³ Smith, *The Art and Architecture of Ancient Egypt* (New York Penguin Books, 1981) revised by W.K. Simpson, p. 86.

⁴ Petrie, *l.c.*

⁵ *Ibidem*, pl. XIV.

period. Let us now examine the archaeological evidence pertaining to the discovery of this statuette as well as the artistic and historical evidence connected with the IVth and XXVIth dynasties.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

The materials recovered from Petrie's excavation of the temples at Abydos span dynasties I to XXX⁶. Because of unclear stratigraphy caused by a water table high enough to obscure the sequence, Petrie dated the site by using historical evidence in place of stratigraphic analysis⁷. Other investigators, in particular Barry J. Kemp, have tried more recently to re-evaluate the evidence and clear up some of the dating problems⁸. The following is a summary of the relevant buildings on the site.

There are several constructions of the Ist to the VIth dynasties, including one temple which is dated to the Ist dynasty reigns of Kings Zer and Den on the basis of inscriptions found in a pit to its south⁹. In addition, Petrie stated that there was some evidence pertaining to pre-Menite kings in the building¹⁰, which is surrounded by a long wall; this temple consists of an entrance and store rooms. It was expanded during the IInd and IIIrd dynasties¹¹. Next to this temple are the foundations of another building which Petrie describes in detail, because more substantial remains of it were extant in the excavations than of any other temple from the early period. Petrie dated this latter site to the time of Pepi I of the VIth dynasty on the basis of two stone gateways and a stela which stand in situ in front of the temple¹².

Further support for this dating comes from the alabaster vases belonging to Pepi I and Pepi II found in the same area¹³; Petrie believed that this structure might have been constructed in the IVth dynasty and re-used by Pepi¹⁴. However, this supposition is without concrete foundation.

This summarizes the Old Kingdom buildings in the temple complex. It is important to note that no scholar has assigned a structure to the IVth dynasty, despite Petrie's hypothesis, and with the exception of the little ivory statuette found in a central storage chamber, no inscription or other evidence found in the area has been dated to the time of Khufu¹⁵.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 23-39.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 9-10.

⁸ Kemp, *MDIAK* 23, 138.

⁹ Petrie, *o.c.*, p. 9.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 8.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, pl. LI.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 9.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 11.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 9.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, pl. LI, room C.

Petrie's explanation concerning the lack of evidence for a IVth dynasty temple came from Herodotus' statement that Khufu closed the temples of the gods and set all the Egyptians to work on his pyramid¹⁶. Herodotus' information is suspect, given that he did not visit Egypt until the middle of the 5th century B.C., some 2000 years after Khufu's reign began (Ca. 2571 B.C.). Some of the objects from the Ist to VIth dynasties found in the temple area were inscribed, but the majority were not. For example a glazed vase of Aha and thirty ivory carvings¹⁷, which were not inscribed and which Petrie dates to the Ist dynasty, were found in a pit outside the temple. With them were broken figurines which Petrie thinks were thrown into the temple¹⁸.

Objects from the Ist dynasty, such as flint flakes from the time of King Peribsen and the head of a king wearing the white crown, were thought by Petrie to be the work of an unconventional school¹⁹. However, they were later assigned to the Ist dynasty. Other uninscribed figures, those of a young boy and a woman, and an inscribed fragment with the signs *mr*, *'nh* and *dt*, were found in the same area along with some flat sheets of glaze which look like model axes. Petrie has stated that this form of ax with lugs is unknown in metal before the XIIth dynasty²⁰ although isolated examples may be earlier. Petrie also found a corn flower in an early temple to be dated to the XVIIIth dynasty²¹, thus further proving that objects from later periods were thrown into earlier temples.

There were very few objects that Petrie dated to the IVth dynasty. These included the statuette of Khufu, some wooden fragments that were found in the Ist-IIIrd dynasty temple areas of Building K²², a limestone fragment bearing the ka name of Men-kau-Re, as well as names of the kings of the Vth Dynasty, and objects dated to the XIIth and XIIIth dynasties²³. When Petrie found the name of King Khufu on the side of the statuette he accepted it as more than ample evidence for dating the statuette to the IVth dynasty. His theory of the existence of a IVth dynasty shrine which, if true, would support his dating of the statuette, is based in fact only on the presence of the statuette itself; this bit of circular reasoning proves nothing. Building K, in which the statuette was found, was constructed against a sixth dynasty gateway; except for the statuette and the inscription of Men-kau-Re, there is no archaeological evidence that Building K is

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 10 (also Herodotus II, § 124).

¹⁷ Petrie, *o.c.*, p. 23.

¹⁸ *L.c.*

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 23-4.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 25 = pl. V, no. 36. Also Lucas, *Materials*⁴, p. 179, states that there is a very close connection between glaze and glass. Glass

was not a separate discovery from glaze; the date of discovery of glass is around the beginning of the XVIIIth Dynasty.

²¹ Petrie, *o.c.*, p. 26.

²² *Ibidem*, p. 30.

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 31-3 and plate XVI.

a IVth dynasty structure. Barry Kemp, who utilized Petrie's publications and notebooks, concluded that there is no clear evidence that Building K can be dated to the IVth dynasty. Regarding the dating of the structure Kemp states :

« one may infer that this reason was the ivory statuette of Khufu found in one of the rear chambers, but it is obvious that the building or the statuette, or both, may have been quite old when one was placed in the other. There is only one certain fact that is relevant. Building K was constructed against a wall containing a sixth dynasty gateway »²⁴.

What Kemp decides in the conclusion of his article about Petrie's dating is possibly the last citation which points to concrete evidence that there was no temple or shrine from the IVth dynasty at the site.

« It finally remains to point out that it is even more misleading to go one stage further and to use these deposits for dating other similar material to the first or second dynasties. This has been notably the case with a group of objects claimed to derive from an accidental find at Abydos, and now in a private collection recently published by H.W. Müller. Without a meaningful context we have absolutely no limits at all for dating individual pieces »²⁵.

In the records of his excavations of the temple of Khenti-imnti, Petrie describes the pottery forms from the IIInd-Vth dynasty; he describes forms that occurred in the IIInd dynasty and continued into the IVth and Vth dynasties but gives no indication that IVth dynasty pottery was found in Building K²⁶. This alone is nearly enough evidence to say definitely that the area was never occupied in the IVth dynasty. Therefore, it would seem that there is no archaeological context to date the Khufu statuette to the IVth dynasty. The only backing for Petrie's date is the presence of Khufu's name, and this hardly constitutes solid and undeniable proof. There are several instances of artifacts dated to one period on the basis of their inscriptions which were later found to be from a different period. Such is the stela of Khufu's daughter (also known as the Inventory stela), which mentions that the Temple of Isis had been discovered and restored together with the Sphinx by Khufu.

« He (Khufu) found the House of Isis Mistress of the pyramids, beside the House of Harmakhis (Hor-em-akhet, the Sphinx) on the north-west of the House of Osiris, Lord of Rosta (*pr Wsir nb R-sf3w*) »²⁷.

²⁴ Kemp, *o.c.*, 152.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, 155.

²⁶ Petrie, *o.c.*, p. 39.

²⁷ *BAR I*, § 180, p. 85.

This stela is discussed thoroughly by several egyptologists²⁸ and is thought to be a forgery, perhaps of the XXVIth dynasty. The temple of Isis in which the stela was found was built perhaps as early as the XVIIIth dynasty, on the usurped foundations of the offering temple of Queen Henutsen's subsidiary pyramid beside the south-east corner of the great pyramid²⁹. Archaeologists at the time studied this stela very carefully because accepting its statement would mean a change in the whole history of the Old Kingdom especially if, in truth, the Sphinx was discovered by Khufu. Their study attributed the stela to the time of Psusennes I (Pasebkhanu) of the XXIth dynasty³⁰, because of the architectural context and the artifacts with which it was found. Daressy disagrees and dates the stela to the Saite period, or XXVIth dynasty³¹. Whichever is the case, there is general agreement that the stela does not relate accurate history, especially in view of the fact that the Isis Temple was built, at the earliest, in the XVIIIth and more probably not until the XXVIth dynasty³².

Petrie's explanation for the lack of IVth dynasty artifacts in the temple complex is based on Herodotus, who says :

« but Cheops, who was the next king, brought the people to utter misery. For first he shut up all the temples, so that none could sacrifice there; and next, he compelled all the Egyptians to work for him, appointing some to drag stones from the quarries in the Arabian mountains to the Nile »³³.

His stories were based on tales passed down through many centuries from the end of the IVth dynasty on through several dark ages by people who had forgotten much of their history. Herodotus himself tells us that his information was only hearsay from the mouths of his guides and even emphasized that he did not always believe what was told to him³⁴.

We have no literature from the Old Kingdom with which to compare Herodotus' portrait of Khufu. The Westcar papyrus, which was written during the Middle Kingdom

²⁸ Such as Yoyotte, « Les Bousiris et les Abousir d'Égypte » (Toponymie de l'Égypte Pharaonique I), in *GLECS*, 8, 59, who cites the stela of Khufu's daughter and the unedited stela Cairo 66612, Petrie, *Memphis* I, pl. 32.

²⁹ Hassan, *Excavations at Giza* III, p. 101, gives the text of a stela collated by Grdseloff dedicated in the temple of Isis, Mistress of the Pyramids, by King Ay. The stela records an endowment of

land given to one of the king's officials.

³⁰ Petrie, *History*¹ III, p. 62.

³¹ Daressy, *RdT* 30, 1-10.

³² Hassan, *o.c.*, p. 101.

³³ Herodotus II, *l.c.*

³⁴ Drews, *The Greek Accounts of the Eastern History*, p. 81. See also Fakhry, *The Pyramids*, p. 121, and Lüddeckens, in *LdÄ* II, 1147-52.

and copied in the Hyksos period ³⁵, describes the king as a cruel ruler. A magician named Djedi came to the court of Khufu, where he was asked if he was capable of cutting off the head of a man and then replacing it. Djedi, being an honorable magician, said that he was incapable of such a deed, and although Khufu ordered a prisoner to be brought as the subject of such an experiment, Djedi declined, instead using a duck to perform the trick. Such information can hardly be used as a basis for the stylistic analysis of the statuette.

Petrie clearly bases his belief that the statuette belongs to Khufu on the ka name engraved on the throne, as is apparent from this explanation : «happily the ka name of Khufu upon the front of the throne leaves no possible doubt on the identity of the figure ³⁶». In his conclusion he repeats the fact that there is no great temple belonging to the IVth dynasty even though there are temples from before and after this period. In explanation of this fact he refers to the tradition of a religious revolution at the rise of the IVth dynasty, which indicates that Khufu closed the temples and abolished the sacrifices ³⁷.

He neglected to discuss the figure as compared to other royal sculptures of the IVth dynasty, but he discussed the head and said «No other egyptian king that we know resembled this head» ³⁸. It seems to me that his belief that the figure is IVth dynasty work is supported only by his conception of Khufu as he is portrayed by Herodotus. Petrie has read, in essence, a character and attitude, which are not there, into the figure. That he is convinced that the look in the face agrees with Khufu's historical position, means that he depends again on Herodotus' non-contemporary description of Khufu's character. Petrie includes enlarged photographs of the head of the figure in his book, saying that it should be studied, meaning that it is the task of other egyptologists to study and date this figure by comparing it to Old Kingdom sculpture. It was, in his opinion, his job to be the excavator, and the job of others to date the figure.

Archaeologists and art historians have since mistakenly followed Petrie's lead in describing the statuette's strength of character and vigorous expression, although these features of Khufu are stressed only in the Late Period. Among the egyptologists who have written on ancient egyptian art, only some have even mentioned the statuette and often these have evidently read Petrie's description before viewing the statuette ³⁹. The

³⁵ Simpson et al., *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*³, p. 15-30.

³⁶ Petrie, *Abydos II*, p. 30.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 48.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 30.

³⁹ As in Smith, *HESPOK*, p. 20, who explained the art and sculpture of this period in more detail. He followed Petrie's description of the figure, thus : «The face is broad and forceful with a strong jaw». Murray, in *Egyptian Sculptures*,

expression of terrible energy of the pyramid builder which M. Murray also emphasizes has no connection with the figure⁴⁰. In fact it would probably have been out of character for the builder of the great pyramid to have such a small statue of himself made for the main temple of Khenti-imnti. In my opinion the face of the Khufu statuette is in fact quite average, lacking entirely the look of a powerful king. Indeed, upon close examination it becomes apparent that the figure represents a very young man.

COMPARISONS WITH OLD KINGDOM ART

A comparison of the figure with examples of IVth dynasty art work reveals a few correlations, such as a statuette of Mycerinus, which is closest in type to the Khufu statuette⁴¹. This figure, also of ivory and twice the height of the Khufu figurine was found by Reisner in the pyramid complex of Mycerinus at Giza (Pl. II *a*). Except for the similar size and material, there is little stylistic resemblance between the two artifacts. The image of Khufu is very squat, and crudely made. It shows no sign of careful workmanship, and therefore may be the work of an artisan rather than an artist. In contrast, the statuette of Mycerinus is finely carved, the figure slender and graceful, of elongated proportion; there is no head, but the body displays a delicate vitality, with its carefully rendered torso and finely detailed kilt⁴² (Pl. II *b*). As there were only 38 years between the reigns of Khufu and Mycerinus, it would be a departure from the generally accepted view of Egyptian art to say that artistic style had changed so drastically in so short a time (the only exception to this rule would be the Amarna period).

It is possible that the quality of workmanship is due to the ability of the sculptors or the fact that one piece (that of Mycerinus) was produced during the lifetime of the king while the other (that of Khufu) was made well after the death of the king⁴³.

p. 51 stated, «the terrible energy of the great pyramid builder is visible throughout the figure». Other writers like de Rachewiltz, in *Egyptian Art*, p. 59. Roulin, in «Ivoires de la Haute Egypte», *Rev. arch.*, 4 Ser. III, p. 108; Michalowski, in *L'Art de l'Ancienne Egypte*, p. 141-8, goes on to say basically the same thing. Aldred, in *Egyptian Art*, did not mention the statuette in his book.

⁴⁰ Murray, *Egyptian Sculptures*, p. 51.

⁴¹ Smith, *Ancient Egypt as represented in the Museum of Fine Arts* (Boston, 1960), p. 46.

⁴² *Ibidem*.

⁴³ Smith, *HESPOK*, p. 22. This comparison of the Khufu statuette with other royal statuary of the IVth Dynasty is supported by Reisner, who in his study of the IVth Dynasty sculpture separates it into two very different schools, designated A and B. School A spans the reigns of Snefru

Although there are no other complete statues known, several alabaster bases were found by Reisner in his excavations at Giza. One such base, bearing the feet of a seated statuette and inscribed with Khufu's name, is in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (no. 24-12-59)⁴⁴. Another similar base is inscribed with the last part of Khufu's name in a cartouche⁴⁵. These fragments bear no resemblance whatsoever to Petrie's figurine stylistically.

The non-royal sculptures which can be assigned to Khufu's reign are those of Hemywnw, Rahotep and Nofret, Prince Khufu-Khaf and the scribe Kawab son of Khufu⁴⁶. The statue of Hemywnw was found in his tomb in the western field at Giza and was completed before Khufu's death, around 2580 B.C. It is important not only because it is the only complete private statue from that time found at Giza, but also because Hemywnw was Khufu's cousin, holding the offices of vizier and master of works⁴⁷. In the true style of Old Kingdom sculpture, the statue shows great realism in the face and body; in contrast, Khufu's face is more realistic than his body, but neither of them attains the level of portraiture represented by prince Hemywnw's statue. In terms of workmanship, also, there is no similarity. In spite of the loss of Hemywnw's eyes we can say that it is the masterpiece of this era⁴⁸.

The statues of Rahotep and Nofret are also among the masterpieces of Khufu's time. Discovered by Mariette at Meydum, they are in the same tradition as the Hemywnw statue⁴⁹, and show the subjects in great detail. They are beautifully worked and brightly painted. Again, the realism of these portraits far exceeds that of the Khufu statuette.

Both the statue of Hemywnw and the group of Rahotep and Nofret are much more finely sculptured than that of Khufu, although one would expect quite the opposite, i.e., that a statue of the king should be more carefully treated than those of lesser members of the royal family. A king, especially one as reputedly powerful (and if Herodotus is to be believed, as evil) as Khufu would surely not tolerate such shoddy workmanship in personal representation while his subjects were being immortalized by skilled artists. Comparing non-royal statues with Khufu's is important in spite of the fact that they are different in scale and material.

and Khufu, while school B dates from the time of Djedefre to the end of the IVth Dynasty. Unfortunately, the only extant artifact of Reisner's School A is the Khufu statuette, a figure which does not correspond to any other IVth Dynasty royal sculpture.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 20.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 21.

⁴⁷ Aldred, *o.c.*, p. 67.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*.

No stylistic parallel can be drawn between Khufu's figurine and the IIIrd and IVth dynasty statues of Djoser, Djedefre, Khephren and Mycerinus, which are all equally well sculptured. Similarly, the statuette has no visible relation to the Djedefre head at the Louvre and two heads in Cairo which date to only eight years after Khufu's death⁵⁰. The only two possible parallels from the Old Kingdom are the crown of Weserkaf's greywacke head from Abusir⁵¹, and the face of the granite head of an unknown king (III-IVth dynasty)⁵². However, it will be seen below that, for various reasons, they support rather a different dating for the Khufu statuette.

ARTISTIC CONVENTIONS

The IVth dynasty produced several artistic conventions to which the Khufu statuette does not conform. The IVth dynasty throne is always found with a high back, as is seen in the statue of Khephren found in his valley temple at Giza⁵³. One of the group statues of Mycerinus and even the VIth dynasty alabaster statue of King Pepi I seated in jubilee attire all have high seat backs⁵⁴.

The IInd dynasty statue of Kha-sekhem found at Hierakonpolis is seated on a block-like throne; the top of the seat slopes down slightly from back to front and is provided with a low back-rest. In the limestone statue of Djoser, the throne is similar to that of Kha-sekhem⁵⁵. It is very difficult to compare Khufu's throne with any royal throne of the Old Kingdom, even with the chairs of a non-royal statue like that of Rahotep/Nofret, where the chair reaches to the top of the head; in the case of Hemywnw, the chair has no back. There are no known examples of low-backed thrones from the IVth dynasty. Yet Khufu's throne has a low back⁵⁶. In an inscription in high relief in the alabaster quarries at Hatnub, we can see a throne of Khufu portrayed in an identical manner with that of King Snefru shown seated at one end of the curtain box of Hetepheres⁵⁷. These suggest that the statuette was not indeed made in the Old Kingdom (Pl. III a).

Another IVth dynasty artistic convention which is violated by the Khufu figurine has to do with the attitude of the hands. For similar statuettes, the traditional position is

⁵⁰ Smith, *o.c.*, p. 31-3 and plate 11.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*, p. 119.

⁵² *Ibidem*, p. 86.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, p. 111.

⁵⁴ Aldred, *Old Kingdom Art in Ancient Egypt*, p. 45.

⁵⁵ Smith, *HESPOK*, p. 13-4.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 21.

⁵⁷ Baker, *Furniture in the Ancient World* (New York, 1967), p. 50.

both arms resting on the thighs, one hand laid palm down and the other clenched in a fist. Examples of this are Khephren's statue and the non-royal figure of Hemywnw. However, while one of Khufu's hands is in the traditional pose, the other is across his chest, holding a flail. The statues of Djoser and Rahotep do have a similar positioning of the hands but the orientation is nonetheless quite different ⁵⁸.

The fact that Khufu is holding the flail is significant because there are absolutely no other instances of IVth dynasty statuary where the subject is holding this item. There is only one royal statue in the Old Kingdom holding the flail, the alabaster statuette of Pepi I, and there are only two examples of a king holding the flail in the Old Kingdom, occurring in a relief panel from the southern tomb of King Djoser and in the limestone funerary stela of King Snefru using the flail as a whip, not as a symbol. The flail is not seen as a symbol of Osiris before the First Intermediate Period and is not found in statuary before the Middle Kingdom (Pl. III b).

The other problem connected with the presence of the flail is that it was a symbol of Osiris. During the Old Kingdom, Abydos was dedicated to the worship of Khenti-imnti. The earliest known inscription in the temple complex, which was found on a piece of an upright vase reads : « Khenti-imnti Upwawt » and belonged to the furniture of the temple of Upwawt ⁵⁹. This piece was found in the chambers north of the building. It shows that the earliest temple was that of Upwawt, not of Osiris ⁶⁰. During the Middle Kingdom, Osiris became syncretized with Khenti-imnti and took over his temples ⁶¹. Before this time the two gods were distinct, and Osiris did not have a cult at Abydos. From these two points it is clear that if the statuette of Khufu had indeed been placed inside Building K during the IVth dynasty, the flail, whether or not it is considered a symbol of Osiris, is inappropriate.

Further evidence to support the theory that the statuette of Khufu was not carved in the IVth dynasty lies in a comparison of this object with a series of royal reliefs which were originally in the valley and the funerary temples of Khufu's pyramid at Giza and were apparently moved during the Middle Kingdom ⁶². Of the reliefs found at el-Lisht, the first one is in low relief, its style and subject similar to that of the reliefs of Sahure ⁶³,

⁵⁸ Aldred, *o.c.*, p. 48 and 63.

⁵⁹ Petrie, *o.c.*, p. 29; also look Clark, *Myth and Symbol in Ancient Egypt*, p. 103.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, pl. I.

⁶¹ Breasted, *Development of Religion and*

Thought in Ancient Egypt, p. 287.

⁶² Goedicke, *Re-used Blocks from the Pyramid of Amenemhet I at Lisht*, p. 11-25.

⁶³ Borchartdt, *Das Grabdenkmal des Königs Ne-User-Re II*, pl. V.

Nyuserre⁶⁴, and Pepi II⁶⁵. The subject of Khufu's reliefs is the golden Horus name and offering bearers. What is evident here is that Khufu's reliefs form a continuum of style and subject matter with the Vth and VIth dynasties. Why then is it that Khufu's figurine does not follow the sculptural style of the Old Kingdom? For this very reason, Reisner assigned this statuette to «school A» of which to date it is the only example.

Exploring further, it will be observed that Khufu wears the red crown of the Delta, certainly unusual for a statuette made in the IVth dynasty and placed in an upper egyptian temple. Theoretically the king should be wearing the white crown, or the double crown which took its form in this period⁶⁶, as do all other statues and reliefs spanning many dynasties found in the temples of Osiris at Abydos. Examples of kings wearing the white crown or double crown found at Abydos are an ivory statue of an unknown Ist dynasty king wearing the white crown⁶⁷, a relief of Sebekhetep III and another of Ramses III⁶⁸. None wears the red crown except the statuette of Khufu.

Further, the statuette is made of ivory. Ivory from hippopotami and elephants was worked by the ancient Egyptians starting in the Neolithic period as is exemplified at Merimde⁶⁹.

The sources of ivory used in the Neolithic are not known to us; from the V and VIth dynasties, however, it was brought from Punt and the Sudan⁷⁰. In the Old Kingdom the sources of ivory were not plentiful but after the XVIIIth dynasty Egypt obtained it from different areas⁷¹.

A large number of ivory carvings of dogs and lions from the Ist dynasty have been discovered; from the IIIrd to VIth dynasties, no animal carvings and only two royal figurines were found⁷². Ivory was always considered a magical substance and the IVth dynasty was a stable period in which egyptian kingship reached its glory with the reign of Khufu, who built the Great Pyramid, and was considered a god⁷³. During the XXVIth dynasty, however, in particular ivory was used on a large scale⁷⁴. Examples of this

⁶⁴ *Ibidem*, pl. VIII.

⁶⁵ Jéquier, *Le Monument Funéraire de Pepi II*, III, pl. XII.

⁶⁶ Abubakr, *Untersuchungen Über die Ägyptischen Kronen*, p. 60, fig. 39 and also Strauss, *LdÄ* III, 811-16.

⁶⁷ Petrie, *o.c.*, pl. XII.

⁶⁸ *Ibidem*, pl. XXVIII and pl. XXXV.

⁶⁹ Junker, *Merimde-Beni Salame*, p. 237.

⁷⁰ Lucas, *Materials*⁴, p. 32.

⁷¹ BAR II, § 9265, p. 109.

⁷² Petrie, *The Arts and Crafts of Ancient Egypt*, p. 130.

⁷³ David, *Cult of the Sun — Myth and Magic in Ancient Egypt*, p. 116 and p. 51, also look Fazzini, *Images for Eternity*, p. 18.

⁷⁴ BAR III, p. 336.

include a lotus flower and a man bearing offerings found in Memphis⁷⁵. Khufu's statuette is small enough to be considered an amulet such as the ones which were used in abundance from the First Intermediate Period on, since amulets tend to abound in periods of uncertainty.

My final artistic argument for why the figurine cannot be an Old Kingdom statue is this : if an artist of the IVth dynasty were going to make a statue of Khufu, the divine God on earth, son of Horus, he would not leave the feet in such an unfinished state. It is clear that this statuette was manufactured as an amulet to be given to people so that they might benefit from the king who is a god. If it were really an Old Kingdom piece, it should have been perfect because the artist would wish to please his king and this is not accomplished by shoddy workmanship.

I believe that, instead of the IVth dynasty, the figurine was carved in the XXVIth dynasty, perhaps as a copy of a IVth dynasty statue or as the impression of a memphite artist.

The temple of Osiris was rebuilt in the XXVIth dynasty⁷⁶. This was described on the statue of the architect who built the temple, who was also in charge of the religious service of the temple of Osiris⁷⁷. The XXVIth dynasty was the high point of an Old Kingdom revival in which the cult of Khufu became very strong. The ancient Egyptians of the Saite period worshipped him as a god; his name was considered powerful in itself and was written on scarabs in the Late Period for use as protective amulets and was also connected with many legends⁷⁸.

The scarabs bearing Khufu's name which Petrie collected support the statement that Khufu's cult was very strong in the XXVIth dynasty. It is important to note that scarabs did not appear in the Old Kingdom but began to be used from the First Intermediate Period on⁷⁹.

Further, in the XXVIth dynasty, the Great Pyramid was reopened and the cult of Khufu given great prominence⁸⁰. There are relevant priests known to us from this period such as : *Nfr-ib-r*^c whose name appears on a ring and *Psmṯk-mnh* whose name was on a Serapeum stela⁸¹. The fact that there were priests of Khufu at this late period

⁷⁵ Petrie, *o.c.*, p. 136.

⁷⁶ Petrie, *Abydos* II, pl. LXIII-LXX.

⁷⁷ Petrie, *A History of Egypt* III, p. 355.

⁷⁸ Fakhry, *o.c.*, p. 103.

⁷⁹ Petrie, *Scarabs and Cylinders*, no. 412-2-4.

⁸⁰ Fakhry, *o.c.*

⁸¹ Wildung, *Die Rolle ägyptischer Könige im Bewußtsein ihrer Nachwelt*, p. 184-8, the name of the priest *Nfr-ib-re* is on a ring from the Abott Collection in New York and we do not know where it was found; the Serapeum stela no. 314 is in the Louvre.

means that he was considered a god by both the kings and the people. Herodotus supports this idea when he gives us the story about Khufu, explaining that the ancient Egyptians in the middle of the fifth century B.C. were given to conjecturing how Khufu built his great pyramid. They created stories connected with his daughter being a harlot and asking every lover to bring stones for the pyramids of both herself and her father⁸².

In the New Kingdom, the Giza necropolis was revived as a religious center and a very important pilgrimage area; Amenhotep II built a temple at the northeast corner of the Sphinx and mentioned Khufu in the stela he erected therein⁸³. In this period, a village called Busiris (*pr Wsir*) grew up beside the necropolis to receive pilgrims⁸⁴. In the XXVIth dynasty, Giza was once again a popular site for ancient Egyptian pilgrims because of Khufu's cult; this is why, as previously mentioned, his pyramid was reopened. Re-use of the necropolis is evidenced by the sarcophagus of Queen Nekht Bastet-eres and the Serapeum stela of her son Pasenkonsu, which were found near the Great Pyramid⁸⁵. The sarcophagus of Aahmes chief of archers was also found at Giza, as were shafts and pits from the XXVIth dynasty, showing the renewed popularity of the site. Equally, tombs of the Old Kingdom were reused in the Late Period for burial so that people could be nearer to the god *Hr-m-3ht*⁸⁶. Some burials were even made in shafts beside the Sphinx and around the pyramid of Khufu.

In addition, there are XXVIth dynasty tombs at Giza, including the tomb of Niwehebre⁸⁷, the tomb of They and the tomb of Pedēsi and Tairi⁸⁸.

Similarly at Memphis, the capital of the Old Kingdom, Aahmes (XXVIth dynasty) rebuilt the temple of Ptah and erected a new temple to Isis.

Along with the re-use of Old Kingdom sites came a resurgence of interest in Old Kingdom art. The artists of the Late Period copied the style of Old Kingdom artifacts because they desired to copy their inspiration⁸⁹. The old gods, long forgotten by the Egyptians, became favorite subjects for the workshop laborers of this period⁹⁰. Officials of the XXVIth dynasty even revived ancient titles that had been out of use for some 2000 years. Old Kingdom themes, such as rows of offering bearers, were used again in

⁸² Blakeney, *The Egypt of Herodotus*, p. 70, also look Herodotus II, *l.c.*

⁸³ Hassan, *ASAE* 37, 124-34. Also Hassan, *The Great Sphinx and its Secrets*.

⁸⁴ Yoyotte, *o.c.*, p. 59.

⁸⁵ Petrie, *A History of Egypt* III, p. 355.

⁸⁶ Hawass and Lehner, *Excavation in the Area*

of the Sphinx (Forthcoming).

⁸⁷ PM III², p. 297.

⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 296-7.

⁸⁹ Smith, *The Art and Architecture of Ancient Egypt*, p. 398-405.

⁹⁰ Budge, *Egypt under the Saites, Persians and Ptolemies*, pl. VI.

Late Period sculpture⁹¹. For example, the wall reliefs in the temple of Taharqa, a Late Period king, in Nubia are decorated with Old Kingdom scenes, which Saïte craftsmen had copied while restoring a chamber under the Step Pyramid of Djoser⁹².

This new school of art was labeled « Neo-Memphite ». It was Etienne Drioton who first coined this expression and most egyptologists have since agreed that the art and sculpture of the XXVIth dynasty were inspired by the Old Kingdom⁹³.

The Kurru ivories, which show men leading an ostrich and offering birds and animals, are another example of Old Kingdom style art⁹⁴. The seated scribe of Montuemhat is also in the tradition of the Old Kingdom, as is the grey basalt figure of a seated king from the British Museum. The scenes of the tomb of Aba at Thebes are taken from the Old Kingdom tombs at Deir el-Gabrawi, as is the statue of Taharqa showing him as a sphinx. The tomb of Pabasa also shows the Old Kingdom style. The pylon of the temple of Taharqa at Kawa similarly appears to have been copied from the Vth dynasty funerary temple of Sahure at Abusir⁹⁵. The royal work of the Sudan followed the Old Kingdom tradition in building pyramids as well as duplicating Old Kingdom models⁹⁶.

The black granite head of Taharqa, the last king of the XXVth dynasty, shows realistic modelling. The head is small compared to the body and shows influence from the sculpture of the Old Kingdom⁹⁷. The similarity between the heads of Taharqa and Khufu is striking.

Even minor arts in the XXVIth dynasty show the Old Kingdom tradition⁹⁸. Consider the obsidian head of Amenemhat III, which some archaeologists believe to be a XXVIth dynasty head. Weigall made a comparison between it and the head of Mentuemhat and concluded that the art of the XXVIth dynasty follows exactly the tradition of the Old and Middle Kingdoms⁹⁹.

The impact of the earlier artists is therefore clear in the XXVIth dynasty. The kings of the Late Period depended on the art work of the Memphite artists: either they had work done at Memphis itself, or they had the artists brought to Nubia or Thebes to do it there. With all this evidence of Old Kingdom artifacts used as models for the Late Period Art, it is not surprising that a statuette of Khufu would be made in the Late

⁹¹ Smith, *o.c.*, p. 419.

⁹² *Ibidem* also Bothmer, *ESLP*, p. xxvii.

⁹³ Drioton, *Egyptian Art* (New York, 1950), p. 133.

⁹⁴ Smith, *o.c.*, p. 404.

⁹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 349.

⁹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 408.

⁹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 403.

⁹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 426.

⁹⁹ Weigall, *Ancient Egyptian Works of Art*, p. 314.

Period. Even Petrie suggests that it might have been copied from a life-size statue¹⁰⁰. We can understand that it would be unreasonable for an artist of the IVth dynasty to copy this figurine from a life-size statue while the king was still alive. Therefore, it has to have been made at some point after the Old Kingdom.

The theory that the statuette was copied from a IVth dynasty statue of Khufu would explain several things. First, it would explain the presence of the red crown on the king's head. If, as I suspect, the statue from which the XXVIth dynasty artist modelled this ivory stood in the valley temple of Khufu, the king would be wearing the red crown, as befits a statue in a lower egyptian temple.

Summarizing, then, the evidence from the XXVIth dynasty, it is important to note that the temple of Osiris at Abydos was rebuilt in the XXVIth dynasty. Additionally, Khufu was worshipped as a god in the XXVIth dynasty, and his cult was very important : his name was powerful enough to be used on scarab amulets, and he was connected with many legends of the time. The great pyramid was reopened in the XXVIth dynasty and the cult of Khufu was given great prominence at Giza, evidence of which is the fact that we know of three priests of Khufu during this period. The art of the XXVIth dynasty copied Old Kingdom art, and the statuette of Khufu can be considered as belonging to this Neo-Memphite style. The statuette can be considered as an amulet, and in the Late Period such amulets were in fairly common use — they were found inside personal dwellings or in temples, where worshippers had placed them as offerings to their gods. Ivory was commonly used in the manufacture of amulets during the XXVIth dynasty. Finally, documented mass-production of amulets at this period would account for the poor craftsmanship of the artifact; the statuette would not have been meant as a work of art but rather as a protective charm.

Initially, Smith's statement regarding the similarity between the Khufu figurine and a red granite head of a king wearing the crown of Upper Egypt would seem to refute my theory. He tries to show that the forceful expression of this face is similar to the ivory figurine of Khufu¹⁰¹. Further, in comparing the crown of Weserkaf from Abousir with that of Khufu, it can be seen that they are very similar in style and profile, including even the fit of the crown around the ears¹⁰².

However, I would contend that these facts support my theory, since the XXVIth dynasty artists did follow Old Kingdom tradition and it would make sense therefore that there exist similarities between a XXVIth dynasty copy and original Old Kingdom work¹⁰³. In

¹⁰⁰ Petrie, *Abydos* II, p. 30.

¹⁰² *Ibidem*, p. 117.

¹⁰¹ Smith, *o.c.*, p. 80.

¹⁰³ Bothmer, *o.c.*, p. xxxvii.

other words, the Old Kingdom crown of Weserkaf, or one like it, may well have been the inspiration for the style used much later on the Khufu figurine.

CONCLUSION

The most important evidence for my conclusion that the Khufu statuette belongs to the XXVIth dynasty is the importance of the Old Kingdom ruler's cult at that time. The people in the Late Period remembered him from such Middle Kingdom texts as the Westcar Papyrus and later on through the words of Herodotus. While there is no evidence for a IVth dynasty temple in the Khenti-imnti complex, a temple to Osiris was opened in the XXVIth dynasty, at the same time that Khufu's cult was rising and his pyramid reopened. In time his cult was so important as to warrant some priests and his name being engraved upon countless scarabs and amulets.

The art of the Saite period follows that of the Old Kingdom, copying such themes and styles as were thought important. Similarly, Khufu's throne is unlike that of any other royal statue of the Old Kingdom. Whereas the statues usually found in the Abydos area wear the White or Double Crowns, the Khufu figurine wears the Red Crown, further evidence of copying. It was probably made by a memphite artist who may have been influenced by local legends of Khufu.

Because of the size and workmanship of the statuette, it can be suggested that it is an amulet. Such charms were uncommon in the Old Kingdom but are easily explained by the prominence of Khufu's cult in the Saite period. Mass production due to great demand could account for its poor craftsmanship qualities. That it was a common object is inferred by its place of resting — thrown in a storeroom.

Artifacts from the Late Period attributed to Khufu, such as the Inventory Stela from the temple of Isis east of the Sphinx, are further pieces of evidence that the people of Saite times cared a good deal about Khufu. The figure was probably thrown into the Osiris temple by accident or for religious purposes, but such a motive may never be known. However, the question of the origin and age of the ivory Khufu statuette discussed in this paper may be more completely answered if more work is done in the valley temple of Khufu at Giza, the only site the artifacts of which could have served as models for an amulet found in Abydos.



Statuette of Khufu.



a

b

Ivory statuette of Mycerinus.



a



b

Statuette of Khufu.