The Protection of Nebet-Hetepet

*The naophorous statue Chiddingstone Castle 01.0492*

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**Résumé**
Publication d'une statue naophore de la Basse Époque appartenant à Tjanefer, dédiée à une déesse appelée « l’Or », très probablement Nebet-Hetepet. Comparaison avec des objets similaires suggère qu'elle provient d'Héliopolis de la 30e dynastie. Les brèves inscriptions hiéroglyphiques offrent des variations originales de formules et maximes religieuses connues d’autres monuments.

**Mots-clés :** Statue naophore ; Basse Époque ; Héliopolis ; Nebet-Hetepet

**Abstract**
Publication of a Late Period naophorous statue of Tjanefer, dedicated to a goddess called “the Gold”, most likely Nebet-Hetepet. Comparison to similar objects suggest it derives from Heliopolis during Dynasty 30. The brief hieroglyphic inscriptions present original variations of religious formulae and maxims attested on other monuments.

**Keywords: **Naophorous statue; Late Period; Heliopolis; Nebet-Hetepet

**Comment citer/How to cite**

doi : 10.54641/journals/bseg.2022.e1194

Publié le/Published on 04.08.2023
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Introduction

Several years ago I presented a new interpretation of naophorous and theophorous statues.² In the rare examples discussed there, dedicants identified themselves via texts or vignettes with Shu-Heh, the Atlantid deity who supported the sky, the solar disk, and by extension, all portable divine statues. Such priests thus emulated the Heliopolitan god, enabling them to carry the divinely-loaded shrines.

Of course that is but one connotation of the naophorous gesture. Beholders of such statues might naturally assume the sacred effigies contained within the shrines performed an apotropaic function – not unlike similar divine images on amulets, jewelry, or even body tattoos.³ Indeed, multiple inscriptions demonstrate that such priests expected divine protection from their favorite deities, in return for the pious acts the individuals performed for them; both figuratively via the gesture, and literally by supporting temples and cults during their lifetimes.⁴ The brief hieroglyphic inscription on the Late Period statue published here, almost certainly from Heliopolis, presents yet another variant of this mutually assured protection. These religious phrases offer insightful variants on similar expressions known from other Late Period monuments.

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doi: 10.54641/journals/bseg.2022.e1194
The statue in question belongs to the Denys E. Bower collection at Chiddingstone Castle, Kent (01.0492). It came to my attention in Texas while on loan at the Houston Museum of Natural Science. The object has been discussed only rarely, but was duly recorded by the specialists of Late Period monuments from the Delta (Bothmer and De Meulenaere, J.J. Clère, Yoyotte). Denys E. Bower (1905-1977) acquired this object from Sotheby’s in 1954, and Bothmer first recorded the statue in his original dwelling in London, before Bower purchased Chiddingstone Castle (1956).

This statue measures 23cm (height) by 13.5cm (width) by 14.5cm (depth), and is made from greywacke. It would have originally represented the subject standing behind the shrine, which must have been level with his waist. Now only the naos and the figure’s hands survive, suggesting the object may have been repurposed – either during antiquity or by modern art dealers – as a simple divine statue.


6 The author would like to thank Naomi Collick and the Trustees of the Bower Bequest at Chiddingstone Castle for permission to publish the object here. In addition, Tom Hardwick kindly provided photographs and details about the statue.


8 Corpus of Late Egyptian Sculpture (CLES) #827. Scans of the CLES records kindly provided by Kathy Zurek-Doule of the Brooklyn Museum.

9 Mss. of J.J. Clère in the Griffith Institute, Oxford: (https://archive.griffith.ox.ac.uk/index.php/clere-collection; accessed 27 July 2023): “0.5.0.1. List of sistophorous statues, and notes on statue at Chiddingstone Castle.” Scans of these notes kindly provided by Francisco Bosch-Puche.

10 A copy of the inscription by Jean Yoyotte is preserved in the Clère Mss (preceding note), as well as an excerpt from the thesis of his student: E.S. El-Banna, Matériaux pour servir à l’histoire d’Héliopolis, PhD Dissertation, EPHE Vth section 1975, pp. 418-419, Doc. BE.G.34.

11 Sotheby and Co., Ethnographical Art including works of art from Benin, Oriental Art and Antiquities (July 5-6), London, 1954, p. 27, No. 208 (second of two items). The statue apparently came from the collection of Sir Robert Young, a high-ranking Member of Parliament.


13 For similar examples, see D. Klotz, BIFAO 114 (2014), p. 313, with n. 152.
survives, giving the object the appearance of a sistrum.\textsuperscript{14} The entire back pillar is now completely destroyed.

Unlike many naophorous statues of the Thirtieth Dynasty and Ptolemaic Period, the human figure does not wear a long wrap-around robe. Instead, the bare knee visible on his left side (fig. 3) betrays that the subject wore a short kilt, traces of which might be identified beneath his right hand (fig. 2). Such a difference might suggest the owner wanted to emphasize military or civil duties on this particular statue, rather than any sacerdotal duties. Late Period priests frequently boasted of moving with \textit{calm} steps (\textit{qb-nmt.t}) while keeping their chests hidden (\textit{štȝ-šnb.t}), epithets reflected in their tight and modest wrap-around robes.\textsuperscript{15} Contemporary generals and viziers of Dynasty 30, meanwhile, often wear nothing more than short kilts,\textsuperscript{16} while their typical epithets boast of having \textit{broad} steps (\textit{wsḫ-nmt.t}), whether unrestricted access within the royal court, or wide-ranging travels through foreign lands.\textsuperscript{17} As discussed below, the owner of the statue does not mention any titles in the brief hieroglyphic inscriptions on the front of the naos.

Inside the shrine stands a goddess who wears a thin, diaphanous dress through which her navel is visible,\textsuperscript{18} a smooth wig, a small uraeus, and an elaborate crown. The diadem is shaped just like the naos containing the goddess, resulting in a sculptural \textit{mise en abyme}.\textsuperscript{19} Yet the smaller replica contains a different manifestation

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\textsuperscript{17} E.g. H. De Meulenaere, \textit{BIFAO} 61, 1962, p. 33, col. 1.


\textsuperscript{19} Compare a statue from Dynasty 26, where the naoform sistrum is placed within a similarly-shaped naos: Emory University Museum of Art and Archaeology, 1988. 004.001 https://collections.carlos.emory.
of her, a rearing uraeus wearing a solar disk, and the shrine is flanked by volutes, typically associated with Bat and related goddesses. Similar crowns adorn the heads of multiple goddesses: Nehemetaway in Hermopolis, Hathor of the Benenet (Chonsu Temple) in Thebes, and above all Hathor-Nebet-Hetepet in Heliopolis. Incidentally, this is also the standard iconography for the Hathoric shm-sistrum (sometimes called the bhn), a symbol closely linked with Nebet-Hetepet as the divine Hand of Re. One might consider the present naophorous statue a unique variant of the related sistrophorous sculpture, except here the entire goddess, not just her head, is represented. Indeed, the present inscription features a textual parallel to other inscribed sistrophores (BM 1132+1225, see infra, text note d), and the goddess depicted on those objects is frequently invoked as “the Gold (Nbw)”, “the Golden (Nbw.t)”, or more specifically Hathor-Nebet-Hetepet.

This statue certainly dates to the Late Period, and a number of considerations would support dating it more precisely to Dynasty 30. A series of comparable naophorous statues, each holding different local divinities (Atum, Re-Harakhty, Mnevis, Iusaas(?), Horus of Hetpet), are known from Heliopolis during Dynasty 30, so the statue would complement that set of votive images. In addition, the

deu/objects/4193/naophorous-statue (accessed 27 July 2023); see also JWIS IV/2, 828-829 (60.173).

20 For the headdress on sistrophores, see E.B. SIMMANCE, Communication with the Divine in Ancient Egypt, pp. 208-213.

21 D. KLOTZ, Caesar in the City of Amun: Egyptian Temple Construction and Theology in Roman Thebes (MRE 15), Turnhout, 2012, p. 118.

22 J. VANDIER, “Iousâas et (Hathor)-Nébet-Hétépet,” RdE 16, 1957, pp. 83, Fig. 2; 93, Fig. 6; 115, Fig. 12A, 142-143, Figs. 21-22; idem, “Iousâas et (Hathor)-Nébet-Hétépet: deuxième article,” RdE 17, 1965, p. 136.


24 So already E.B. SIMMANCE, Communication with the Divine in Ancient Egypt, p. 251.

25 E.B. SIMMANCE, Communication with the Divine in Ancient Egypt, p. 360 (A.12); 392 (B.9); 418 (B.51); 419 (B.53); 426 (B.63); 444 (B.90); 445 (B.92); J.J. CLÈRE, Les chauves d’Hathor (OLA 63), Leuven, 1995, pp. 12, n. 38; 188-189, n. a; 245 (s.v. Nwb and Nwbt).

26 E.S. EL BANNA, Matériaux pour servir à l’histoire d’Héliopolis (supra, n. 9), p. 419, dated this object roughly to the fourth to third centuries BCE. B.V. BOTHMER, CLES #827 (supra, n. 7), classified this object as “Post Pers(ian)”, which would include Dynasty 29 through the early Ptolemaic Period.

dedicant’s name, Tjanefer (infra, text note i), his reverence for “the Gold,” and the prevalence of quasi-alphabetic spellings link him closely to the Heliopolitan elite of that particular era, a group profiled in a classic study by Jean Yoyotte. Nonetheless, none of these arguments are conclusive, and the lack of titles for the owner prevent any definitive links to individuals known from other securely dated monuments. For this reason, although Dynasty 30 seems most likely, an earlier date in Dynasty 26 cannot be entirely ruled out, especially as more Saite monuments such as the colossal statue of Psamtek I are being uncovered in Heliopolis.

Any inscriptions that may have existed on the back pillar are now destroyed. The only surviving texts decorate the front frame of the naos. While on other statues these texts usually have two symmetric texts, mentioning separate deities or multiple epithets of one, on this monument one continuous inscription is distributed between the two sides, beginning on the right (R) and continuing to the left (L).

**Text and Translation** (see fig. 4)

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31 A similar layout can be found around the naos of a statue dedicated to Imhotep: C. Cozzolino, “Recent discoveries in Campania”, in R. Pirelli (ed.), *Egyptological Studies for Claudio Barocas*, Naples, 1999, p. 28.
I have placed myself around The Gold.\(^{(a)}\)

O my Mistress:\(^{(b)}\)

may your protection encircle me!\(^{(c)}\)

Whoever places his trust\(^{(d)}\) in you:

whom would he fear?\(^{(e)}\)

He reaches land safe and sound\(^{(f)}\).

The beginning is with you,

consisting of all good things;

whoever follows you ends up as a venerated one,\(^{(g)}\)

(namely) a servant who does what you love.\(^{(h)}\)

The one venerated of his mistress,

Tjanefer.\(^{(i)}\)

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Textual Notes

(a) “The Gold” (or just “the Gold goddess”)\(^{32}\) was a standard epithet of Hathor and related goddesses throughout Egyptian history. During the Late Period, Hathor-Nebet-Hetepet of Heliopolis, the divinized hand of Re-Atum, was often invoked directly by this epithet,\(^{33}\) as made explicitly clear in the Delta Mythological Papyrus.\(^{34}\) One of the most common sacerdotal titles from Heliopolis was “servant of the Gold (hm Nbw(.t)).”\(^{35}\)

The epithet “Golden One” or “Gold” was used especially by individuals addressing their beloved goddess (e.g. Hathor, Nebet-Hetepet,

\(^{32}\) For the interpretation of this epithet, see D. MEEEKS, Mythes et légendes de Delta d’après le papyrus Brooklyn 47.218.84 (MIFAO 125), Cairo, 2006, pp. 61-62, n. 86; E. GRAFFE, “Hathor ist „(das) Gold“, die „Gold(göttin)“ - nicht „die Goldene“!”, CdE 96, 2021, pp. 192-205.


\(^{34}\) D. MEEEKS, Mythes et légendes de Delta, pp. 9-11, especially III, 8.

Mut) with expressions of personal piety,\textsuperscript{36} as well as in connection with beer offerings and drunkenness.\textsuperscript{37} Certain texts note that shrines for local goddesses were also referred to as “the Gold” by the local population.\textsuperscript{38} Compare the biography of Tathotis, a Ptolemaic follower of Hathor of Memphis,\textsuperscript{39} who speaks of her close bond to the goddess as follows:

“The Gold (...) she blessed me in this moment.”\textsuperscript{40}

“The Gold listens to my voice!”\textsuperscript{41}

(b) Statue owners normally address their beloved goddess by her name or epithet, followed by the phrase “my mistress.”\textsuperscript{42} The specific sequence of “the Gold, my mistress” occurs on other private statues.\textsuperscript{43}


\textsuperscript{38} The Hermopolis stela of Nectanebo I (JE 72130) mentions that the temple of Nehemetawy was also called “the temple of the Gold (pr nbw)”: G. Roeder, “Zwei hieroglyphische Inschriften aus Hermopolis (Ober-Ägypten)”, \textit{ASAE} 52, 1954, p. 403, l. 24; a similar shrine for Nebtu-Tefnut north of Esna was named for “the great Gold”: \textit{Esna} II, 130, 4-5; \textit{Esna} III, 241, 11 (69). Note also that Hathor of Mefkat was referred to as “the Gold” in her local popular festivals: B. Turajeff, “Die naophore Statue Nr. 97 im Vatikan”, \textit{ZÄS} 46, 1909, pp. 76-77, col. 3; S. Dhennin, \textit{Mefkat et la déesse Hathor: Topographie et religion dans la IIIe province de Basse Égypte} (MIFAO 146), Cairo, 2022, pp. 127-128.


\textsuperscript{40} \textit{Ibid}, p. 292, line 5.

\textsuperscript{41} \textit{Ibid}, p. 293, line 7.


\textsuperscript{43} A.M. Donadoni Roveri, “Una statua cubo del Museo egizio di Torino”, \textit{OA} 6, 1967, pp. 114-
For this reason, one might suggest emending the present text to: “I have placed myself behind <you> (<ḥȝ=<ṫ>), o Gold, my Mistress!” In that case, the first of the two ṭ’s following nbw might have been mistakenly perturbed by the scribe.

Nonetheless, one may also compare the sistophore of the Vizier Nespaqashuty D, which contains other parallels to the present statue (infra, text note c). On the upper surface of the statue base, Nespaqashuty addresses all passers-by: 44

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Praise me,} & \\
\text{for I am a follower of The Gold!} & \\
\text{Praise my Ka before my Mistress!} & \\
\text{Whoever favors it (viz. the statue) she will return (the favor) to him.} & \\
\end{align*}
\]

On that statue, “the Gold” is an epithet of Mehyt, also identified with Nebet-Hetepet (see infra, text note d).

(c) In similar formulas, dedicants usually specify that they place their arms around the divinity or their naos. 46 Yet here, Tjanefer uses the first-person dependent pronoun to emphasize that he has placed his entire body behind the shrine of Nebet-hetepet. 47 Similar phraseology involving the reflexive pronoun occurs in the so-called Saite Formula, where the statue owner appeals to the local City God: “place yourself around/behind me (ḏỉ/my tw ḥȝ=ỉ)!” 48

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115, line 4 (Mut); P.J. O’ROURKE, BES 10, 1989/90, p. 119, Text X (Bastet; for the reading, see D. KLOTZ, BIFAO 114, 2014, p. 324).

44 BM EA 1132 + 1225 = JWIS IV, 180, 53.316.

45 K. JANSEN-WINKELN, Sentenzen und Maximen in den Privatinschriften der Ägyptischen Spätzeit, Achet Schriften zur Ägyptologie B1, Berlin, 1999, p. 88 (A.4.b.24) translated the second half of this text, but mysteriously added a question mark following the preposition “vor (ḥṛ).” Since this is a sistrophorous statue, anybody who praises Nesqaqashutu would necessarily be in the presence of his Mistress, the divine face on the sistrum.

46 G. POSENER, La première domination perse en Égypte (BdE 11), Cairo, 1936, pp. 3, line 3; 5, n. f.


48 Following the analysis by D. KLOTZ, “Get thee behind me, City God! New Kingdom versions of the so-called ‘Saite Formula’,” ZÄS 143/2, 2016, pp. 204-213.
The result here is that Nebet-Hetepet will surround Tjanefer with protection (see text note d). A similar transaction is detailed on the statue Vatican Inv. 22689:

\[
rdi.n=i \cdot wy=i \cdot m \cdot hpt=k
\]

That I set my arms embracing you,

\[
r \cdot rdi.t \cdot wnn=k
\]

was to make you exist

\[
m \cdot zgw=i
\]

in my protection.

(d) Given the present context and the set expression \( mḥ-ỉb \ m \ \ NN \), “to have confidence in \( NN \),” it would make the most sense to emend the face sign (\( \text{роду} \)) for the very similar heart (\( \text{рет} \)). Multiple texts from Dynasty 26 use nearly identical phraseology, albeit in a different sequence, noting how divine protection “surround” or “encircle” (\( pẖr \)) their follower as a result of their faith in the local god or goddess (\( mḥ-ỉb \)):

Tjanefer*:\n
BM 1132+1225:54

Edinburgh A.1956.134:55

JE 65905:56


51 The same mistake is attested elsewhere: e.g. S. CAUVILLE, \( Dendara. \) \( Le \) \( fonds \) \( hiéroglyphique \) \( au \) \( temps \) \( de \) \( Cléopâtre \), Paris, 2001, p. 254; D. KURTH, \( Einführung \) \( ins \) \( Ptolemäische \) \( I), \( Hützel, \) 2007, p. 179, n. 13.

52 For the apotropaic nuances of the verb \( pẖr \) (“encircle”, “contain”, “enchant”) see R.K. RITNER, \( The \) \( Mechanics \) \( of \) \( Ancient \) \( Egyptian \) \( Magical \) \( Practice \) (4\textsuperscript{th} printing) \( (SAOC \) 54), Chicago, 2008, pp. 57-67.

53 The two phrases are reversed here to underscore the parallelism with the other texts.

54 \( JWIS \) IV, 180, 53.316 (Sistrophorous statue of the Vizier Nespaqashuty).


56 \( JWIS \) IV, 785, 60.78 (right side).
On the first statue (BM 1132+1225), multiple passages connect the name of Mehyt (Mḥy.t), the local Thinite form of Tefnut, with the verb mḥ, first along the front of the sistrum (JWIS IV, 180):

\[ \text{Nb.t-ḥtp.t sḏm.(t) nb.(t) } \]

Nebet-Hetepet, she who hears everything.

\[ \text{mḥ.(t)-ỉb n it=s } \]

trusted one of her father,

\[ \text{m rn=s pw n Mḥy.t } \]

in this her name of Mehyt.

On the right side, this goddess addresses Nespaqashuty:

\[ \text{mḥ-ỉb=k } \]

Be confident (mḥ-ỉb),

\[ \text{wnn(=ỉ) m zȝw=k } \]

since I am in your protection (zȝw).

\[ \text{ink mḥ-ỉb n it=s } \]

I am the trusted one of her father,

\[ \text{hrw 'hȝ } \]

on the day of combat,

\[ \text{m rn(=ỉ) pw n Mḥy.t } \]

in this my name of Mehyt.

In other biographical texts, it is the divinity’s prestige (qfy) which surrounds (pẖr) the dedicants’ bodies. Elsewhere, the act of placing a divinity in one’s heart (rḏỉ m ỉb), synonymous with “filling one’s heart”, results in the numinous protection covering the devotee’s body.

(e) Because of the uniliteral spelling without any determinatives, multiple readings are possible here. The present translation assumes a

57 For the goddess on the sistrophore identified with Mehyt, see primarily J.J. Clère, Les chauves d'Hathor, pp. 7-10, 98-100.

58 JWIS IV, 180, copied this first group as sḏm=k, but the museum photograph supports reading the second sign as a nb-basket (https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA1225, accessed 27 July 2023), as already recorded by J. Vandier, RdE 17, p. 96 (E LXX), and G. Godron, “A propos de la déesse Sédjémé-Nébet,” RSO 43, 1968, p. 320, No. 4. For the Heliopolitan epithet, see further LGG VI, 740b-c; D. Klotz, ZÄS 139/2, 2012, p. 139, n. 23.


rhetorical question, with nim, “who” following the preposition n.\(^{61}\)
Since the interrogative is properly speaking in-m, one could consider all three signs part of this word, similar to writings of nnk for ink (first person pronoun) common during Dynasty 30;\(^{62}\) however, the verb snḏ typically requires an indirect object.\(^{63}\) This interpretation is supported by a similar passage from the tomb of Samut/Kyky (TT 409), in reference to Mut:\(^{64}\)

\[
\begin{align*}
ib = i \text{ mh(.w) m t} \text{hy} = i
\end{align*}
\]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{hnw.t}
\end{align*}
\]
\[
\begin{align*}
nn \text{ snḏ} = i \text{ n rmṯ.w}
\end{align*}
\]

Since my heart is filled with my Mistress, I shall not be afraid of any people.

Samut goes on to extol the virtues of placing Mut in one’s heart and adopting her as a guardian, claiming that for those who trust her, not even gods or death can harm them.\(^{65}\) Similarly, Tjanefer here rhetorically inquires whom should he fear, whether divinity or mortal, when he trusts in Nebet-Hetepet.

As an alternative reading, the final three signs could represent the rare verb nnm, “to go astray; err,” which occurs otherwise primarily in literary or funerary texts,\(^{66}\) in the stative: “whoever trusts in you, their fear goes astray (i.e. disappears).” Finally, one might read the

\(^{61}\) Fr. NEVEU (trans. M. Cannata), The Language of Ramesses: Late Egyptian Grammar, Oxford and Philadelphia, 2015, pp. 233-234 (43.3.2.3.2-3). Multiple examples of nim following the preposition n (“to whom”; “of whom” = “whose”) from the TLA: pAnastasi I, 8, 3; pLeiden I 343+345, R 3, 6 (S. BECK, Exorcism, Illness and Demons in an Ancient Near Eastern Context. The Egyptian Magical Papyrus Leiden I 343 + 345 (PALMA 18), Leiden, 2018, pp. 32, 34-35, line 6, 36); pMMA 36.9.21, 7, 13; 9, 1 (J.-Cl. GOYON, Le papyrus d’Imouthès, fils de Psintæs au Metropolitan Museum of Art de New-York (Papyrus MMA 35.9.21), New York, 1999, pp. 34, 36, Pls. VI, VIII); M. SANDMAN, Texts from the Time of Akhenaten (BiAeg 8), Brussels, 1938, p. 96, 11; plnsinger 31, 22.


\(^{65}\) M. A.-Q. MUHAMMED, ASAE 59, 1966, Pl. LI, cols. 68-75.

goose with its alternate value \( wdb \), “to turn back,”\(^{67}\) thus reading: “whoever puts his trust in you, he returns back to us (\( wdb=f \ n=n \)), as he reaches land (\( m \ sȝḥ=f \ tȝ \)) safe and sound.”

(f) Given the brevity of this inscription, it is perhaps best to understand \( sȝḥ-tȝ \), “to reach land,” in its figurative sense of “to succeed” (\( Wb. \ IV, 20, 15 \)). Nonetheless, similar nautical references abound in wisdom literature and expressions of personal piety, where divinities are credited for steering ships correctly, or even for rescuing the faithful from the depths of the sea.\(^{68}\) For certain Egyptians, piously serving their favorite divinity (“placing them within one’s heart”) through the course of their life was compared to an aquatic journey, expressed most often with the expression “traveling upon one’s water.”\(^{69}\)

On the statue CG 807 from Dynasty 26, Horiraa similarly links putting his faith in Ptah with a successful, presumably metaphorical, nautical voyage:\(^{70}\)

\[
\begin{align*}
mḥ.n=i & \quad ib=i \quad im=k \\
m & \quad bw \quad nb \quad (...) \\
rdi.n=k & \quad w(i) \quad ḫr \quad mȝʿ \\
nn & \quad šȝw \\
\end{align*}
\]

I trusted in you in all places (…)
and you set me upon a good wind,
without any shipwreck.

Just as Nebet-Hetepet dispels Tjanefer’s fear, so Somtutefnakht confidently made the overseas voyage from Persia to Egypt safe and sound, thanks to his faith in Heryshef (lines 12-14):\(^{71}\)

\[
\begin{align*}
smd=i & \quad ḫȝs.wt \quad wʿ.k(w) \\
\ddi=i & \quad wȝḏ-wr \\
ni \quad snḏ=i & \quad (...) \\
\end{align*}
\]

As I traversed foreign nations alone,
so I sailed across the Great Green.
I was not afraid (…)

---

\(^{67}\) D. Kurth, *Einführung ins Ptolemäische I*, pp. 254 (90), 266, n. 344.

\(^{68}\) For this theme, see J.C. Darnell, *Theban Desert Road Survey II: The Rock Shrine of Pahu, Gebel Akhenaton, and Other Rock Inscriptions from the Western Hinterland of Qamûla*, 2013, pp. 34-36, 40-43.


I reached Herakleopolis, without even a hair being taken from my head.

As for the final expression in this verse (“safe and sound (m nd-wdȝ)”), multiple Demotic texts emphasize how Isis brings back travellers “safe (wdȝ).”

(g) This final expression, juxtaposing the beginning and the end, finds close parallels on a number of monuments of the Late Period: the statue of Ptahhotep (Brooklyn 37.353; Dynasty 27), the monument of Somtutefnakht (Naples 1035; Dynasty 31), and a fragmentary Ptolemaic statue (Tanis D 114). In addition, one may compare a similar phrase from the statue Berlin 1048 + 3/95 (Dynasty 26, reign of Amasis).

Tjanefer:
Tanis D 114.
Brooklyn 37.353.
Naples 1035.
Berlin 1048.

The first four examples (Tjanefer, Tanis, Brooklyn, Naples) begin more or less the same, but only the first two continue with phr (imȝh). The second two (Brooklyn, Naples), specify that the local gods help the devotees “achieve the end ((s) ṛ phwy).” The final example

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72 H. Kockelmann, Praising the Goddess, pp. 26-27 (Text 4.7), 29 (Text 5.5), 64-65.

73 Quoted by O. Perdu, RdE 36, 1985, p. 110, n. a.


77 Yet another parallel to these two phrases was published by O. Perdu, “Un témoignage inédit sur un grand dignitaire saïte. Le précepteur Horirāa”, RdE 67, 2016, pp. 92-93, line 6, 106, n. z.
(Berlin 1048), from Dynasty 26 uses the same key phrases, but in a different order:78

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mw.t nfr} & & \text{O Mother of God (Neith):} \\
\text{nt(t) ir(.t) h3.t} & & \text{it is you who makes the beginning,} \\
\text{pḥ(wy) m-ʿ=t} & & \text{and the ending is in your hand.}
\end{align*}
\]

In effect, the Chiddingstone Castle statue monument appears to conflate multiple religious mottos current in Late Period monuments.79

The aforementioned statue of Ptahhotep, although only partially preserved in the relevant section, seems most likely to have originally contained the same sequence as Tjanefer (in bold), interspersed with other remarks (col. 4):80

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{h3.t m-ʿ=k m bw nfr} & & \text{The beginning is with you in goodness,} \\
\text{nh.n(=i) ḫr=k} & & \text{I requested from you} \\
\text{ʾrq(=i) phwy} & & \text{that I might achieve the end.} \\
\text{iḥ ḏd ii ḫr[-sȝ]} & & \text{Ah, those who will come after[wards] shall say:} \\
\text{[šms nṯr r ḫmȝḥ]} & & \text{[‘Whoever serves god will be a Venerated one!’]}
\end{align*}
\]

(h) These are standard expressions of personal piety, but nonetheless compare the similar turn of phrase on a contemporaneous statue from Heliopolis, in which the “servant of The Gold” refers to Hathor-Nebet-Hepet: “I am a venerated one of her domain, who does what her Ka

78 P. TRESSON, Kémi 4, 1933, p. 132, understood this passage differently: “O Mère divine de celui qui a créé le commencement et la fin (Re), voici que (...).” Yet it was Neith herself, not her son Re, who created the universe according to Saite traditions (cf. the Neith cosmogony from Esna temple), and so she was frequently associated with “the beginning (ḥȝ.t)”: R. EL-SAYED, La déesse Neith de Saïs (BdE 86), Cairo, 1982, I, pp. 58-61. Neith is associated directly with both the beginning and the end in the hymns Esna III, 212, A; 252, §§3-4; and 317, 2-3. Compare also the quotation reportedly inscribed on Neith’s statue in Sais, which similarly expresses her control over past and future: “I am all that was, what is, and what will be” (Plutarch, De Iside, 9, 354C; J.G. GRIFFITHS, Plutarch’s De Iside et Osiride, Cambridge, 1970, pp. 130-131, 283-284).

79 K. JANSEN-WINKELN, Sentenzen und Maximen, pp. 97-99, especially B.6.a.1-3 (šms nṯr=f r ḫmȝḥ, “whoever follows his god will become a Venerated one”), B.6.a.7 (šms ḫm=k r ḫmȝḥ, “whoever follows his Majesty will become a Venerated one”), and B.6.a.9 (phwy nfr n šms myʾ.i, “a good ending for whoever follows Maat”).

loves.⁸¹ Similarly, on a recently published statue base, the dedicant addresses Hathor-Nebet-Hetepet by calling himself “your servant” and tells her “I do what your Ka loves in all things.”⑵

(i) Tjanefer (Akkadian: Zi-na-pa, Greek: Tinouphis) was a popular name from the New Kingdom through the Ptolemaic Period.⁸³ Multiple examples are attested on Serapeum stelae from Memphis,⁸⁴ statues from Thebes,⁸⁵ a funerary ensemble from Abydos,⁸⁶ and multiple Late Period objects from Heliopolis,⁸⁷ most notably two very fine tomb reliefs.⁸⁸

It is also notable that in the frame story of the Teaching of Ankhsheshonqy, the titular character’s father was from Heliopolis and named Tjanefer, apparently a priest of Re just like his son, while his mother was named Sinoub (Zȝ.t-nbw, lit. “daughter of the Gold”).⁸⁹ Meanwhile a fragmentary Greek literary text (pTurner 8) features another Egyptian prophet named Tinouphis.⁹⁰ As noted in the Introduction, however,
the general popularity of this name and the lack of any affiliations or
titles for the current Tjanefer make it impossible to identify him with
the owners of any other monuments.

Conclusion
The brief inscriptions on this naophorous statuette contain variations of multiple
maxims and pious statements attested on other Late Period monuments. Tjanefer
places his arms around his local goddess, “the Gold” (Nebet-Hetepet), in order
to secure her legendary protection. She banishes his fear, assures a safe passage,
and controls his entire life from beginning to venerated end. Although many texts
refer to Nebet-Hetepet’s erotic role in relation to Atum, as the divinized “Hand of
God,” here she performs a role as personal guardian, just like Mut (tomb of Samut/
Kyky) and Isis (Demotic hymns) elsewhere. Olivier Perdu recently highlighted the
fearsome qualities of Nebet-Hetpet, as expressed on a libation bowl of Montuemhat
(BM EA 1292),\(^1\) appropriate for Tjanefer’s personal champion.

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\(^1\) O. Perdu, *CdE* 95, 2020, p. 38.
Fig. 1: Chiddingstone Castle 01.0492, front.
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Fig. 2: Chiddingstone Castle 01.0492, right. © Trustees of the Denys E. Bower Bequest
Fig. 3: Chiddingstone Castle 01.0492, left.
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Fig. 4: Chiddingstone Castle 01.0492, front detail.
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