

Zoomorphic Seth with King Ramesses II: Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 42993

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Abstract

Despite the ubiquitous mention of the god Seth (Sutekh), chiefly identified with chaos and disorder in the ancient Egyptian religious pantheon, objects representing the deity are extremely rare. Extant instances of his depiction in statuary portray the divinity in composite form, that is, as a human with the head of an animal. A well-known group statue in the Egyptian Museum (Cairo JE 31628) shows King Ramesses III crowned by both Horus and Seth, with both gods represented in composite form. This style of rendering also appears in a small group statue preserved in the Louvre Museum (E 3374) dated to the reign of Ramesses II, wherein Seth is shown beside his sister Nephthys. The statue in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 42993, which is studied here, exhibits a unique model of Seth in full animal form standing behind Ramesses II. However, a noteworthy detail is that the god is not shown crowning the pharaoh. Therefore, this statue reveals a different function of Seth when compared to the group statue in the Egyptian Museum (Cairo JE 31628) and the small group statue of Louvre Museum (E 3374), cited hitherto. The following aspects will be analyzed in this study: the reasons for sculpting Cairo JE 42993 in the manner it appears, the necessity to represent Seth in complete animal form, and the relationship between the monarch and this deity. The researcher will attempt to discuss the essence and importance of the statue through the placement and appearance of the god Seth.

Keywords: Seth, JE 42993, Zoomorphic. Hybrid animal, Ramesses II

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الحيوان الإلهي ست مع الملك رمسيس الثاني: المتحف المصري،

القاهرة JE 42993

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الملخص

على الرغم من ذكر الإله ست (سوتخ) في عدة مواضع، والذي يرتبط بشكل رئيسي بالفوضى والاضطراب في الفكر الديني المصري القديم، إلا أن المنحوتات التي تمثل الإله نادرة للغاية. ويمثل ست في فن النحت بشكل مركب أي كإنسان برأس حيوان، ويظهر تمثال جماعي بالمتحف المصري بالقاهرة رقم JE 31628 الملك رمسيس الثالث متوجاً بكل من حورس وست، مع تمثيل الإلهين في شكل مركب. ويظهر هذا النمط أيضاً في تمثال جماعي صغير محفوظ بمتحف اللوفر E 3374 يرجع تاريخه إلى عهد رمسيس الثاني، حيث يظهر ست بجوار أخته نبت-حت. ويعرض التمثال الموجود في المتحف المصري بالقاهرة JE 42993، موضوع البحث، نموذجاً فريداً لـ"ست" في شكل حيوان كامل يقف خلف رمسيس الثاني. ومع ذلك، هناك تفصيل جدير بالملاحظة وهو أن الإله لم يظهر وهو يتوج الفرعون. ولذلك فإن هذا التمثال يكشف عن وظيفة مختلفة لـ"ست" بالمقارنة مع التمثال الجماعي الموجود في المتحف المصري بالقاهرة JE 31628 والتمثال الجماعي الصغير بمتحف اللوفر (E 3374) المذكورين حتى الآن. وسيتم في هذه الدراسة تحليل الجوانب التالية: أسباب نحت القاهرة JE 42993 بالشكل الذي تظهر به، وضرورة تمثيل ست في شكل حيواني كامل، والعلاقة بين الملك وهذا الإله. وسيحاول الباحث مناقشة جوهر التمثال وأهميته من خلال موضع وظهور الإله ست.

الكلمات المفتاحية: ست، JE 42993، الحيوان الإلهي، الحيوان الهجين، رمسيس الثاني

1. Introduction

This study is a publication of a statue of Seth in the form of a large animal with an unidentified king in the Egyptian Museum — Cairo JE 42993¹ and SR 4/13810. Fashioned out of limestone, its height is 86 cm². According to *Journal d'Entrée* the object is preserved in Room 14 in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo. There has been confusion in the past about the inventory number of this group statue. Studies that incorrectly stated its object number include CG 42993³; Sourouzian too assigned an inaccurate inventory number in her catalogue: Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 42995⁴.

Though the Seth group statue was acquired in 1911 through purchase, its provenance remains unknown⁵. The object was obtained along with another artifact in the Egyptian Museum (Cairo JE 42994) which was purchased by Sir Gaston Maspero, and about which he noted: “.... *I acquired this stone in 1911 from a merchant in Cairo, who told me he had received it from Coptos, and I have since given it to the Museum of Antiquities. I never had any reason to suspect the statements of this kind from the man who sold me the object, but ultimately the provenance cannot be considered assured.*”⁶.

Thus, according to Maspero's account and the sequence of numbers in *Journal d'Entrée* the two objects – Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 42993 and Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 42994 – entered the museum at the same time as they were acquired together. According to Maspero's statement, it is feasible that the two pieces originated from the same site despite the absence of temporal or artistic connections. However, it is unclear whether the merchant acquired them together from Qoptos or if there is a spatial link between the two pieces.

Overall, the group statue is partly damaged. The portion depicting Seth shows the loss of the animal's ears, upper part of its head, and left shoulder; while the statue of the king reveals an absent left upper part, especially the arm, and the left part of the royal *nemes*; the right upper part has a missing arm, and the lower portion shows that the king's left toes are destroyed.

2. Description (Figs. 1-4)

The group statue depicts the god Seth in an animal composite form on a bigger scale, standing behind an unidentified king on a rectangular base. The animal sits with its front feet upright and rests on its hind feet, with its curved tail curled over the right side of the hind foot. As for the head of this animal: its ears are missing, a downward-curved snout is seen, and it wears a smooth tripartite wig. It clearly sports a leonine body, as thick mane is carved on the upper part of the front legs and upper back too. Yet, the animal is carved with a canid head.

¹ TopBib 800-701-160. <http://topbib.griffith.ox.ac.uk/dtb.html?topbib=800>, Last Access: 3/22/2024

² Bodil Hornemann, *Types of ancient Egyptian statuary IV-V* (Copenhagen 1966), 1347

³ Richard H. Wilkinson, *The complete gods and goddesses of ancient Egypt* (London 2003), E20 – 21; Ian Robert Taylor, *Deconstructing the Iconography of Seth*, (Birmingham, 2016), 612; Manar Abou Elfetouh Hamed, “Ancient Egyptian kings under Divine Protection; Reflection in Art,” *JTHH* 4 (2022), 12, fig.37.

⁴ Hourig Sourouzian, *Catalogue de la statuaire royale de la XIXe dynastie* (Le Caire 2019), 809, A-9;

Hourig Sourouzian, *Recherches sur la statuaire royale de la XIXe dynastie* (Le Caire 2020), A-9

⁵ Alexander Scharff, *Die Ausbreitung des Osiriskultes* [etc.] in *Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Philos.-hist. Kl. (1947), Heft 4, pp. 26, 43-4 n. 94.

⁶ Jean Maspero, “À propos d'un bas-relief copte du Musée du Caire,” *RecTrav* 37 (1915), 97.

The animal's front claws are evidently portrayed as being more powerful than its hind claws. Under the head of the animal, the pharaoh stands between its front feet in the traditional striding pose with his left foot forward. The king wears a royal *nemes* headdress and regal beard, while both his arms rest on his legs in a worship position (*i.e.*, hands laid flat on the starched front skirt). The ruler wears a long, triangular kilt which nearly reaches his ankles.

3. Results

The group statue depicts the zoomorphic Seth in the form of a hybrid with a lion's body and a canid head. Lion curled tail, rather than erect tail (forked or snake-like) of the Seth animal. An unknown pharaoh stands between its feet, and below its head, in the traditional worship position. This unique composite animal-shape adds a new form to the god Seth that is hitherto not encountered in ancient Egyptian art, which, though rather mediocre in workmanship, anepigraphic and poorly preserved, makes it the only true statue of the zoomorphic form of Seth.

There are multiple issues concerning this statue: it does not contain any inscription, its provenance is unknown, and its date of sculpting remains shrouded in mystery. The author will attempt to solve this conundrum using the information to hand in order to determine its date of creation based on the artistic features and the historical context of the spread of Seth worship, and then study its function.

4. Discussion

4.1. Dating

4.1.1 Sculptures

4.1.1.1 Group Statues

Pharaohs generally appeared in the company of many animal-form deities in group statuary of the Eighteenth Dynasty, in a manner that imitates the position of the group statue in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 42993. Examples abound in this regard: the remains of the group statue of Thutmose III and the falcon god Montu preserved in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo CG 1237⁷; the famous group statue of goddess Hathor and Thutmose III in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, JE 38574-5⁸. Also, a valuable addition to these is the group statue of Meretseger with King Amenhotep II in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, JE 39394⁹.

In the group statue Cairo JE 42993, Seth's paws bulge prominently conforming to the anatomy of sphinxes depicted in the Nineteenth Dynasty according to Sourouzian¹⁰. A group statue of Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 89120 shows crouching lion of El-kab, showing his teeth and protecting

⁷ Dominique Valbelle, "Le faucon et le roi,". In Anonymous (ed.), *L'impero ramesside: convegno internazionale in onore di Sergio Donadoni*, (Roma 1997), 215 – 216; Ahmed Abdelhafez, "The Falcon god Montu with King Thutmose III (CGC 1237)," *EJARS* 13-1 (2023), 91-96.

⁸ Jadwiga Lipińska, *The temple of Tuthmosis III: architecture. Deir el-Bahari 2* (Warsaw 1977), Ch. 3.

⁹ Cyril Aldred, *New Kingdom art in Ancient Egypt during the Eighteenth Dynasty 1570 to 1320 B.C.* (London 1961), 49; Wilkinson, *The complete gods and goddesses of ancient Egypt*, 224.

¹⁰ Sourouzian, *Catalogue de la statuaire royale de la XIXe dynastie* (Le Caire 2019), 809, A-9

the marching king Sety I leaning against his chest¹¹, and also the attitude of the king as seen in the statues of Sety I leaning against the baboon where the king wears a triangular loincloth¹². Seth's paws too obviously imitating Jackel paws of Ramesseum¹³, due to Jackel has the body of sphinx, paws are those of a lion not a canine, though. The statue of Anubis found in KV 62¹⁴ seems to put the point that the front paws are those of a canine, not a lion.

As per Sourouzian, King Ramesses II adopts the same attitude under the aegis of the hieracocephalic sphinxes and wears a long skirt, standing in a prayer position, with a more elaborate front¹⁵. On a Tanite statuary group attributed to him, Ramesses II appears to wear this costume¹⁶. Also, the king appears in the same position under the protection of the cow goddess Hathor at Saqqara¹⁷. Therefore, the examples of group statues cited thus far support the idea that Cairo JE 42993 can be dated between the Eighteenth to Nineteenth Dynasties.

4.1.1.2 Zoomorphic Seth Statues

Figures of the god Seth is very rare¹⁸. As far I know, no statue of the zoomorphic Seth with the body of a lion has surfaced yet. Based on their divine attributes, we have examples from the Ramesside Period of a few notable statues of animals which can be considered as being related to the spiritual character of Seth. A wooden figure in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo CG 54451¹⁹ is represented in what can be compared to his animal form. The figure is boasting vibrant colors, its face still bears remnants of yellow paint, while its body is marked red. The unique feature of this sculpture lies in the placement of its square-topped ears, which sit atop the double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt, which called *pschent*²⁰, Seth assumes the seated posture of a canine with his front legs placed straight. The body, according to the drawing appears "nervous and elegant"²¹. The figure was found in the excavations of Brunton in the temple of Seth at Matmar. Ramesses II replaced the remains of a New Kingdom temple honoring the 18th Dynasty deity Aten with a temple dedicated to Seth²². It is noteworthy that Brunton's

¹¹ Ursula Schweitzer, *Löwe und Sphinx im alten Ägypten*, *Ägyptologische Forschungen* 15 (1948), 49, pl. XII.1; Peter James Brand, *The monuments of Seti I and their historical significance: epigraphic, art historical and historical analysis* (Leiden 1998), 261, doc. 3.107; Sourouzian, *Catalogue de la statuaire royale de la XIXe dynastie*, 40, no.20.

¹² Marc Étienne (ed.), *Les portes du ciel: visions du monde dans l'Égypte ancienne* (Paris 2009), N° 54; Sourouzian, *Catalogue de la statuaire royale de la XIXe dynastie*, 43, no.22.

¹³ Sourouzian, *Catalogue de la statuaire royale de la XIXe dynastie*, 43, no.262.

¹⁴ Zahi Hawass, *Tutankhamun: Treasures of the golden pharaoh: The centennial celebration* (New York 2018), p. 232

¹⁵ Max-Pol Fouchet, *Nubie: splendeur sauvée. Photographies de l'auteur* (Lausanne 1965), pl. 78, 90; Sourouzian, *Catalogue de la statuaire royale de la XIXe dynastie*, 405, no.257-260.

¹⁶ Sourouzian, *Catalogue de la statuaire royale de la XIXe dynastie*, 811, no. A-11.

¹⁷ Patrick Chapuis & Alain Zivie, "Secrets of Saqqara: A Pharaoh's Peacemaker," *National Geographic Magazine* (2002), 30; Sourouzian, *Recherches sur la statuaire royale de la XIXe dynastie*, Fig. 89c.

¹⁸ Guy Brunton, *Matmar: British Museum Expedition to Middle Egypt 1929-1931* (London 1948), 72

¹⁹ This statue was given the inventory CGC 54451 but unfortunately, this inventory has not been published in the EMC CGC. The volume of the catalog is part of the CG manuscripts which have not been published. The object has not even been entered into the JE or Special register and has no accession number or record in the EMC database. (according to the RCMDD and the EMC Database)

²⁰ Brunton, *Matmar: British Museum Expedition to Middle Egypt 1929-1931*, 72, note. 13; Taylor, *Deconstructing the Iconography of Seth*, 117-118.

²¹ Jacques Vandier, *Manuel d'archéologie égyptienne, tome III: les grandes époques - la statuaire*, vol. II, (Paris 1958), 432, fig.17.

²² Brunton, *Matmar: British Museum Expedition to Middle Egypt 1929-1931*, 64.

excavation at Matmar did not reveal any evidence of temple construction dating back further than the New Kingdom. Consequently, the Ramesside temple of Seth appears to have been a completely new development, with Seth overtaking the Amarna period deity Aten, who would have otherwise supplanted the original local god. The discovery of a sandstone lintel bearing the epithets 'beloved of Seth, likeness of Seth' following the cartouches of Ramesses II²³. Also, the temenos wall around the Seth temple appeared to have been built during the Ramesside period as several of mud bricks from wall that bore the stamp 'Ramesses-Mery-Amen beloved of Seth'²⁴. further supports the conclusion that the object of Cairo CG 54451 dates to Ramesses II.

Another wooden figure (H: 5.7 cm), more an amulet, at best a small statuette, in a similar pose from the Ramesside period at the British Museum (EA 30460)²⁵, but its edge at the base is damaged and is inscribed with an offering formula to Seth. According to Andrews, the text mentions this offering formula gives the god "unusual epithets"²⁶.

By comparing Cairo JE 42993, to the other two figures (Table 1), the importance of the object we are studying here becomes amply clear.

Table 1. Comparison of found objects of the Zoomorphic Seth.

Inv. Number	Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 42993	Egyptian Museum, Cairo CG 54451	British Museum, EA 30460
Acquisition date	1911	1929-1931	1899
Acquisition Method	Purchased	Excavations	Purchased
Acquirer Name	Maspero	Guy Brunton	Rev Chauncey Murch ²⁷ A
Condition	Partly damaged	Lower part is damaged	Fair - damage to the back of the base
Object type	Statue	Figure	Amulet
Material	Limestone	Wood	Wood
Height	86 cm	??	5.82 cm
Provenance	Coptos?	Temple of Matmar	?
Epigraphical inscriptions	✘	✘	✓
Dating	?	Ramesses II	Ramesside

²³ F.L. Griffith, 'The God Set of Ramessu II and an Egypto-Syrian Deity.' *The Proceedings of Biblical Archaeology* 119, 1894, 89; Brunton, *Matmar: British Museum Expedition to Middle Egypt 1929-1931*, 61-63; Taylor, *Deconstructing the Iconography of Seth*, 117-118.

²⁴ Brunton, *Matmar: British Museum Expedition to Middle Egypt 1929-1931*, 68.

²⁵ E. A. Wallis Budge, *A Guide to The Fourth Fifth and Sixth Egyptian Rooms and The Coptic Room* (London 1922), 163, Reg. 30460.

²⁶ Carol Andrews, *Amulets of Ancient Egypt* (London 1994), 79.

²⁷ Based at the American Presbyterian Mission in Luxor, Egypt for c. 25 years in the late 19th century, collector of Egyptian antiquities. Sold parts of his collection to the British Museum between 1890 and 1907. Following his death, a large proportion of his collection was given to the Metropolitan Museum, New York in 1910. After: <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG54617>. (Last Access: 2/7/2024)

4.1.1.3 King Statue

Unfortunately, since there is no inscription, it cannot be said which king is protected by Seth²⁸. By examining statues of the pharaoh in a position of worship under the protection of a god depicted as an animal, it became clear that the image of the king which represented with round face, hands, facing inwards, puffy cheeks, and very thick legs in the statue of Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 42993 only matches, very identically, with the limestone statue of Ramesses II under the protection of Hathor in Saqqara (*fig. 5*)²⁹. Also, the position of the king's feet and arms also corresponds to the statue of King Ramesses II under the protection of the Sphinx (*fig. 6*). The king's facial features also match the statue of the king under the protection of an androcephalic falcon (*fig. 7*).

4.1.2 Depictions

There are many depictions of Seth in zoomorphic form showing the deity with the body of a lion and a coiled tail, as in the object at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 42993. For example, the top of an obelisk fragment of Seti I found in the harbor at Alexandria shows King Seti I as a Seth-headed sphinx³⁰. However, sometimes Seth himself appears as a sphinx as is seen in the Stela at Louvre, E 26017³¹, which dates to the reign of Ramesses II.

So, this most unusual body form – that of a lion employed on the Seth animal-headed sphinx – was confined exclusively to the Nineteenth Dynasty, especially during the reign of Seti I and Ramesses II. However, Seth is depicted with the body of a lion and the head of an animal of the canine family in the depictions, this position does not imitate the position of the seated Seth in the object in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 42993. But the image of Seti I as an emblem holder found in Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum 2288, shows the lion with a human head in the same position imitating the sitting positions of the group statue cited in this paper³².

4.2. Seth In Ramesside Period

In the Ramesside era, the god Seth became the protector of Ramesside kings³³. The founder of the Nineteenth Dynasty, Ramesses I, came from a military family from Avaris with strong ties to the priesthood of Seth. Several Ramesside kings were named after the god, most notably Seti I (literally, “*man of Seth*”) and Setnakht (literally, “*Seth is strong*”).

In addition to this, one of the garrisons of Ramesses II venerated Seth as its patron deity, and this ruler erected the so-called “Year 400 Stela” at Pi-Ramesses to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the Seth cult in the Nile delta³⁴. Even though Seth became a protector of the Ramesside kings and was very popular in that era, he was abhorred by a section that considered him a god of evil.

²⁸ Scharff, *Die Ausbreitung des Osiriskultes*, 43-4 n. 94.

²⁹ Chapuis & Zivie, *Secrets of Saqqara*, 30; Sourouzian, *Recherches sur la statuaire royale de la XIXe dynastie*, fig. 89c.

³⁰ Brand, *The monuments of Seti I and their historical significance*, 497-498, pl.40b.

³¹ [New Kingdom Royal stelae](http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/gri/8ste380.pdf) 803-044-570. <http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/gri/8ste380.pdf>. (Last Access: 2/7/2024)

³² Sourouzian, *Recherches sur la statuaire royale de la XIXe dynastie*, fig. 75e.

³³ Wilkinson, *The complete gods and goddesses of ancient Egypt*, E20-21.

³⁴ Manfred Bietak, “Zur Herkunft des Seth von Avaris”, *Ägypten und Levante* 1, (1990), 9-16.

Some believe that the upper part of the group statue of A falcon with King Ramses II in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 36455, was destroyed by Seth's enemies. Moreover, they further believe that the falcon may have had a Seth head³⁵. The name "Seth" is chiseled out on the plinth and on the left side of the base, but it is left intact at the front. I agree with Sourouzian that the sign on the right and the left side is related to a god and that it was deliberately destroyed, but I do not concur with her argument that the defaced sign represents Seth or that Seth's name was written on the statue³⁶.

The absence of parallels to support this presumption could be explained by the systematic destruction of the effigies of this god. Compare the entirely amputated divine statue of Ramesses II with Seth at Tell el-Yehoudiyeh of the Egyptian Museum, Cairo CG 1228³⁷, which shows the deliberate destruction of the name of Seth in all places on the statue.

4.3. Function

The fact that the pharaoh was under the very special protection of the god Seth in those warlike times is proven by a sculptural figure of the Seth animal in the Cairo, JE 42993, which is shown crouching behind a king to protect him³⁸. Roeder mentioned that Seth in Cairo, JE 42993 protect the king as violent war god³⁹. What is very striking is that the god Seth in the statue of Cairo, JE 42993 appears as a hybrid between the body of a lion and the head of an animal from the canine family. In the Coffin Texts and the Book of the Dead show a clear connection between Seth and the lion, especially Aker.

4.3.1 Coffin Texts

In Coffin Texts, Spells No. 75, 105, 160, 573, 586 Aker was written with the determinative of the animal Seth. Spell 75 of the Coffin Texts shows Aker as a force hostile to the spirit of the deceased, as it takes away a person's soul in the afterlife:

UE: Asyut I- S1C Spell 75

Transcription⁴⁰:



Transliteration:

^a n hf b3. i in 3kr

Translation:

^a my soul was not captured by Aker

UE: Gebelein G1T Spell 105

³⁵ Sourouzian, *Catalogue de la statuaire royale de la XIXe dynastie*, 414-415, no. 264.

³⁶ Hornemann, *Types of ancient Egyptian statuary*, 1308; Valbelle, *Le faucon et le roi*, Tav. VII- VIII; Ahmed Abdelhafez, "A Group Statue of a Falcon with The King Ramses II (JE 36455)," *JARCH* 15-27 (2024), 89-106.

³⁷ Sourouzian, *Catalogue de la statuaire royale de la XIXe dynastie*, 434-435, no. 275.

³⁸ Scharff, *Die Ausbreitung des Osiriskultes*, 25-26.

³⁹ Günther Roeder, *Mythen und Legenden um ägyptische Gottheiten und Pharaonen. Die ägyptische Religion in Texten und Bildern 2*; Die Bibliothek der Alten Welt, Reihe der Alte Orient (Zürich, Stuttgart 1960), Abb. 4 on 37.

⁴⁰ CT I, 398

Transcription ⁴¹:



Transliteration:

^o | *n hf.i in šw n 3mm.i in 3krw*

Translation:

^o | *i am not grasped by Shu, i am not seized by the earth-gods* ⁴²

UE: B3C^a Spell 160

Transcription ⁴³:



Transliteration:

^a | *ii.n N tn w3.s 3krw*

Translation:

^a | *she have come that she may take care of the earth gods*

UE: Asyut I- S1C Spell 573

Transcription ⁴⁴:



Transliteration:

gp pt ih sb3w mnmn pdt sd3w 3kr

Translation:

the sky is dripping with rain, the stars are burning, the sky is moving, the bones of Aker are shaking ⁴⁵

S1C, inner coffin of Mezehti Spell 586

Transcription ⁴⁶:




Transliteration:

^b | *n ir.n.k is r.i^c n sn 3kr pn im.i*

Translation:

^b | *you can't hurt me^c because Aker didn't attack me!*

The hieroglyph written form of Aker's name  gives a connection between the gods Seth and Aker. Also, these spells indicate that Aker's function as an earth god faded and that he had become the embodiment of the underworld. Moreover, he was considered a hostile force threatening the deceased in the other world, just as Seth constantly threatened Osiris. It is therefore clear that the group statue in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 42993, shows the god Seth with the body of a lion.

⁴¹ CT II, 112e

⁴² Faulkner, *The ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts Volume I: Spells 1-354*, 102

⁴³ CT II, 384d- 385a

⁴⁴ CT VI 177b-c

⁴⁵ J. Zandee, "Seth als Sturmgott," *ZÄS* 90 (1963), 152.

⁴⁶ CT VI, 206b

4.3.2 *The Book of the Dead*

In the BD, Aker is again determined with the Seth animal. This is interesting, because Seth is described as a wind deity, not as an earth deity⁴⁷. The Book of the Dead shows Aker as this sitting position of statue Cairo JE 42993⁴⁸. Spell 96 of the Book of the Dead is interesting as it too proves a connection between Geb, Aker and Seth:

Transcription⁴⁹:



Transliteration⁵⁰:

šhṭp.n.ỉ swty nhḥ ʒkr dšrw ỉmʒḥ n gb

Translation⁵¹:

I have pacified Seth with the spit of Aker, and the red gods in the spine of Geb

Furthermore, a variant of the Book of the Dead, Spell 94 reads:

Transcription:



Transliteration:

Pb *ỉn n.ỉ sỉn ʒkr ỉmy stš*

Pe *ỉn n.ỉ hr sỉn hr m (ʒ)kr ỉmy swty*

Pf *ỉn n.ỉ sỉn n ʒkr ỉmy swty*

Translation:

Pb *Bring me quickly Aker, in which Seth is*

Pe *Bring me quickly Aker, in which Seth is*

Pf *Bring me quickly Aker, in which Seth is*

Spell 94 of the Book of the Dead in Turin Museo Egizio 1791 Tb 1-113 from the Hellenic period mentions:

Transcription⁵²:

⁴⁷ LGG VI, 83-85; Georg Meurer, *Die Feinde des Königs in den Pyramidentexten* (= *Orbis biblicus et orientalis* 189 (Saint-Paul 2002), 295-296, 311.

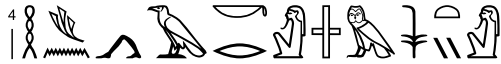
⁴⁸ Erik Hornung, *Das Totenbuch der Ägypter* (Zürich 1979), 61.

⁴⁹ G. Lapp, *The Papyrus of Nu* (BM EA 10477), *Catalogue of Books of the Dead in the British Museum I* (London 1997), pl. 57.

⁵⁰ Stephan Quirke, *Going out in Daylight-prt m hrw: The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead-translation, sources, meanings* (London 2013), 215.

⁵¹ P. Le Page Renouf, *The Book of the Dead. Chapters XCII-XCVIII* (London 1896), 164; Hornung, *Das Totenbuch der Ägypter*, 187; Quirke, *Going out in Daylight-prt m hrw*, 215.

⁵² <https://thesauruslinguaeaegyptiae.de/sentence/IBUBd19PD1KkB0I4ouCQ3rQREhg>, in: *Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae* (accessed: 2/5/2024)



Transliteration

⁴ hn 3kr imy swty

Translation

⁴ Hurry to Aker, who is in Seth!

Therefore, the statue cited in this paper, Cairo JE 42993, which shows a hybrid animal with the body of a lion and the head of an animal, Seth, can be considered an expression of the fusion between the gods Seth and Aker. This is confirmed by the Coffin Texts (wherein the name “Aker” is written with the determinative of Seth), and the Book of the Dead which talks about Aker who is in Seth.

5. Conclusion

It can be concluded that the group statue in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 42993, is the only statue of its kind of the hybrid Seth-animal. The zoomorphic Seth represented in the group statue is a hybrid between the body of a lion and the head of an animal from the canine family. Regarding the dating of this object, the sculptures and depictions suggest that it was carved during the reign of King Ramesses II.

This statue is made not in appreciation of Seth’s status or his religious role, but rather because of the Ramesside family’s rise to power. Seth gained a dominant position in the Nineteenth Dynasty purely owing to political considerations that are represented by the fact that the Ramesside family originally belonged to one of the centers of Seth’s cult.

Concerning the representation of Seth as a hybrid animal, its sitting position and imitation of the same position donned by Aker, the god of the earth represented in Chapter 17 of the Book the Dead, reveals a connection between Seth and Aker, which is clearly expressed in the Coffin Texts (Spells No. 75, 573, 586) wherein the name Aker is written with the determinative of Seth, as well as the Book of the Dead, Chapters 94 and 96, mention “Aker who is in Seth”. Consequently, the group statue expresses a fusion between Seth and Aker working together to protect the king.



Fig. 1. The front part of the Group Statue in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 42993, and SR 4/13810.



Fig. 2. The rear portion of the Group Statue in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 42993, and SR 4/1381.



Fig. 3. The left part of the Group Statue in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 42993, and SR 4/13810.

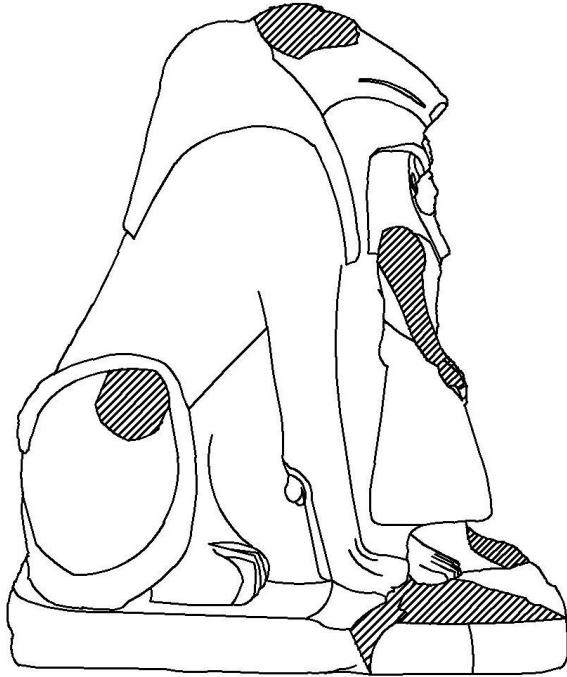


Fig. 4. The right portion of the Group Statue in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 42993, and SR 4/13810.

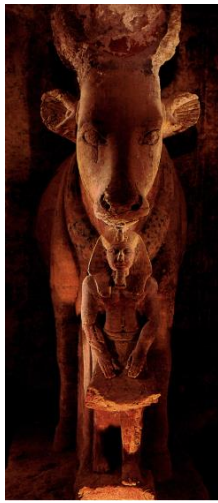


Fig. 5. Limestone statue of Ramesses II protected by the sacred cow, rock statue in Tomb of the official of Ramesses II official Nemtyemes 1.16, Saqqara, Bubasteion. Chapuis & Zivie, *Secrets of Saqqara*, 30

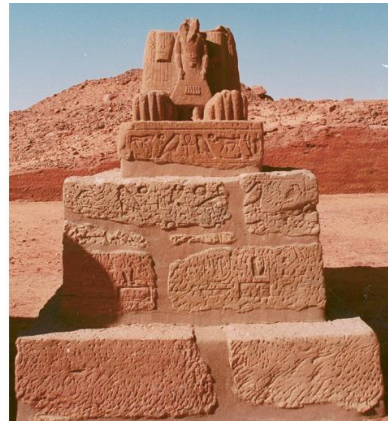


Fig. 6. hieracocephalic sphinx: lying down, legs placed flat on the base, tail curled to the right. King: standing, left leg advanced, hands brought forward and placed flat on the skirt. Ouadi es-Seboua, new site, same position. Sourouzian, Hourig 2019. *Catalogue de la statuaire royale de la XIX^e dynastie*. Bibliothèque d'étude 177. Le Caire: Institut français d'archéologie orientale. no. 257-260; p. 405



*Fig. 7. King protected by an androcephalic falcon probably Ramses II. Tanis, inv. SCA 92-191; T 583 (torsos); T 584 (head). Sourouzian, Hourig 2019. *Catalogue de la statuaire royale de la XIX^e dynastie*. Bibliothèque d'étude 177. Le Caire: Institut français d'archéologie orientale. no. A-11; p. 811*