

Limestone chunk with hieroglyphic inscription

General description

This object is a limestone slab that has hieroglyphs carved into the face of it. The glyphs, when they are in this form, have little to no bearing on funerary beliefs in ancient Egypt beyond the fact that they could have been used at an Egyptian tomb site. Having said that they could be part of a larger word or phrase. We are told by Porter et al (1964, pp. 43) that this glyph appears at the start of the name Wenennefer who was a priest to Osiris. To add to this Manley (1998) translates the glyph in the assumed extended version to mean *“the one who continues to be perfect.”*



Abydos

This piece could be linked to Abydos, as in some of the uncovered tombs at the settlement the same hieroglyph has been discovered. Its presence at Abydos links it back to Egyptian funerary beliefs as the site is a well known tomb/funerary temple site. The site has been active since Egypt's predynastic period. Another important link to funerary beliefs in Egypt is that the burial site at Abydos is supposedly where the lord of the Egyptian afterlife, Osiris, was buried.

Osiris

The link to Abydos provides a link to Osiris, as he was the principal deity that was worshipped in the region. The myth of Osiris comes in two very closely linked forms. The first of these being that he was a child of the earth and sky who was killed and then reborn as the lord of the underworld and judge of the dead. Following on from this the name Osiris is actually a Latinised version of the ancient Egyptian Usir, interpreted as meaning 'powerful' or possibly mighty. The second myth, much like the first, says that Osiris was a son of the earth and sky and that he was cut into pieces by his brother, and then reassembled by his two sisters (Nephthys and Isis). For this part of Osiris' myth we have statuary evidence from either old kingdom or the predynastic Abydos showing the reassembly of the god as well as the insemination of Isis (in bird form).



Priesthood

In ancient Egyptian society the position of priest was highly venerated, with only the most learned individuals being accepted into the priesthoods. The priesthoods of Egypt link back to the funerary beliefs of the country because to perform the sacred rites that go along with the ceremony an initiated priest had to be present. This societal class can also be linked back to the artefact under analysis, if what has been presented is true and it is part of a larger phrase, as Wenennefer can be translated to mean the priest of Osiris.