



### 3.02 Base of a bronze statuette

Bronze.

Late Period, Dynasty 25 – 26, c. 712 – 525 BC.

H. 2.4 cm, W. 4.5 cm, D. 5.7 cm.

This hollow rectangular base is all that is left of what was once a statuette of Osiris-Iah-Thoth, a lunar form of the god Osiris.<sup>1</sup> The appearance of the god would in all essential aspects have been the same as our no. 3.16: a male deity with a tripartite lappet wig with uraeus wearing the moon disc and crescent on his head. Unlike that statuette, however, the present example would have been seated rather than standing, as can be seen from the two parallel rectangular holes in the top surface of the base. The god's throne was undoubtedly made separately. Judging by the size of the base and the quality of the inscription, the lost statuette was probably of more than average workmanship.

The text on the base is the usual votive inscription, but with some rather unusual names. It reads: "Recitation:

May Osiris-Iah-Thoth give life, prosperity and health to Padiwesir, son of Udjahekau, born of the lady of the house, the lay priestess of Mut, Iriru". The title given to the mother is quite rare; its literal meaning is "follower" or "female servant" of Mut; women with this title appear to have served as a kind of unofficial, uncanonical priestesses in the temple of the goddess Mut in Karnak.<sup>2</sup> They are chiefly known from a number of bronze mirrors which played an important part in certain rituals connected with Mut. The title is attested only from the time of Dynasties 25 and 26.

*JvD*

<sup>1</sup> Or perhaps simply Osiris-Iah, with the sign for Thoth (the ibis) used as a determinative, see J. Gwyn Griffiths, "Osiris and the Moon in Iconography", *JEA* 62 (1976), 153 – 159; E. Graefe, "Noch einmal Osiris-Lunus", *JEA* 65 (1979), 171 – 173; Griffiths, "The striding bronze figure of Osiris-I'ah at Lyon", *JEA* 65, 174 – 175.

<sup>2</sup> P. Munro, "Eine Gruppe spätägyptischer Bronzespiegel", *ZÄS* 95 (1969), 92 – 109.