WHEN STATUES SPEAK ABOUT THEMSELVES[1]

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Abstract

Three New Kingdom statues are analysed — the Louvre statue of Maanakhtef (E 12926), the Cairo statue of Minmose (CG 1203), and the Cairo statue of Paser (CG 630) — in order to study how object agency and multiple aspects of the person are mobilised through their inscriptions, as well as how those texts exploit the statues' forms. Selected extracts of the texts are presented in translation and discussed, together with descriptions of the statues. It is argued that the ways in which these texts — as well as others touched on here as *comparanda* — describe their own environments and their own bodies present complex explorations of concepts relating to image-making, audience and personhood.

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When *do* statues speak about themselves? The title of this essay could seem to be a misstatement, as the answer is arguably 'all the time' for Egyptian statues of humans bearing texts. Being inscribed with a name generates an identity, an offering formula generates expectations of interactions with gods and people, including the deified dead, and many statues allude to places of dedication through the gods they address or the spaces that they name. The statues I discuss in this chapter, however, speak about themselves more specifically, describing their surroundings, desires, activities and their bodies in ways that raise basic issues of object agency and aesthetics. I focus on statues from the New Kingdom, especially the late New Kingdom, when examples become more frequent, explicit and elaborate.

One of the functions of representations of elite human or divine forms, in two or three dimensions, is to act as a vessel for non-physical aspects of the person or god, allowing the individual to engage in a range of social transactions and interactions, including participation in rituals, especially the offering cult (e.g. Meskell 2004; Robins 2005; Riggs 2014, 94–8). Partly through their association with the Opening of the Mouth ritual (Fischer-Elfert 1998), human and divine statues are receptive to analyses of their agency, their capacity to 'exert force on the world' (Winter 2010, 307). Discussions have been influenced by the anthropologist Alfred Gell's posthumous 1998 study of forms of agency ascribed to objects in different settings (e.g. Meskell 2004; Price 2011a). An object can become a 'social being', so that it 'does not just reflect the owner's personhood, it has personhood', and objects can 'appear as "agents" in particular social situations' (Gell 1998, 18). Gell's theory was developed for less specifically personal objects than statues, such as Kula valuables, those that could potentially have different 'owners' or, as with divine images, relate closely to many people. Artefacts that acquire meaning through association with, and representation of, one person extend agency and interaction in other directions. For non-royal statues, this potential is expressed in multiple, intersecting ways: through form and pose (such as open palms signifying address to some entity); attributes held (such as naoi and divine statues); and inscriptions. Annette Kjølby (2007; 2009) has extended Gell's models productively for non-royal temple statues, examining the social and economic implications of statue-making in the New Kingdom, including form, material, place, and features of inscriptions, on which I focus in this article.

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Irene Winter (2010, 317), in her critique of Gell's model in relation to Mesopotamian statues, argues that we should untangle the hierarchy from the 'inherently agentive' (the statue commissioner, referent) to the 'delegated agent' (the statue). I attempt here to initiate this untangling by examining how some texts about statues that are inscribed on those same statues express potentials for something like an autonomous 'personhood' and agency, making the objects into more than delegated agents. By considering the work's own conceptualisation of itself, we can start to nuance our ideas of how it performed its creation, presence and social relations. I build upon my suggestion that some Third Intermediate Period statue texts which describe their own sensory environments could be considered 'performative statue biographies', creating identities that are distinct from that of their owner (Frood 2013, 182–4). Such inscriptions can perhaps be more usefully characterised as ekphrasis. Ekphrasis, literally 'speaking out', is a rhetorical description of a work of visual art that enables the object to speak about itself — as with these statue inscriptions — or to be spoken about. It is often considered to have its origins in the earliest Greek literature, Homer's *Iliad* and Hesiod (e.g. Francis 2009; also Bartsch and Elsner 2007). The phenomenon, however, is much older and more widespread; only the term can be seen as originating in the Greek world.

My use of ekphrasis as a term draws in particular on Zainab Bahrani's analysis of Mesopotamian contexts. She focuses her discussion around 3rd and 2nd millennium BC temple votive pieces, arguing for 'its origins in this very ancient votive practice, which originally enabled the image both to reflect on its own status as representation and to participate in the space of life' (Bahrani 2014, 13 and ch. 7). Her analysis builds on her work on the status of images and the meaning of *ṣalmu*, 'image', as 'an entity in its own right, a being rather than a copy of a being', stressing that an image can be 'an ontological category rather than aesthetic concept' (Bahrani 2003, 125, 133). Ekphrasis extends this usage, with the artwork articulating its own ontological status, encompassing aesthetic dimensions.

Here, the work of Jesper Svenbro (1993) and John Ma (2007; 2013) on dedicatory and honorific captions on Archaic and Hellenistic statue bases (respectively) is important. Whereas Bahrani unpacks philosophical implications of image-making and substitution, Svenbro (esp. chs 1–2) uses a first-person inscription on the base of a 6th-century BC statue of a young woman as a starting point for a detailed examination of the implications of object voice and its interplay with form, presence and audience. Ma in turn builds on some of these ideas to examine how syntactical distinctions in captioning present different social, political and spatial meanings. Egyptian statue texts are much longer and more fully integrated with the body and other iconography than the examples Svenbro and Ma treat, while displaying a comparable potential to communicate their place — their simultaneous 'hereness' and 'elsewhereness'.

I examine texts on some New Kingdom statues that speak about the statue. In these texts, a range of voices is found, from third-person descriptions or statements about the statue to the first-person voice of the statue itself, as well as, more rarely, a second-person address to the statue. Such treatments are highly developed in 1st millennium statue inscriptions: temple statues sniff the pungent air (Frood 2013), even complaining when food offerings start to rot and stink (Rizzo 2004); others listen to the singing of priests; and some shabtis yell 'I am here' (Perdu 2000–1). So it is not surprising that significant discussions of the implications of statue texts focus on that period. In particular, Campbell Price (2011b) offers a full and detailed study of the conceptualisation of Late Period statues from Karnak, including function and emplacement in his integrated analysis of inscription and monument. I offer preliminary thoughts on some earlier examples, suggesting that such texts not only mark the statues' agency but also play upon the relationship between the statue and the person it represents. They assert the statue's separate identity (with Clère 1968, 148), beyond ascriptions of agency or notions of substitution. It is this idea of separateness, of 'statue-ness', that may enrich discussions of the materiality and potentials of Egyptian personal monuments.

Statue texts

The amount of text inscribed on a statue's surfaces tends to increase and diversify over time. The majority consist of offering formulas concerned with, for example, the maintenance and provision of the offering cult and the owner's transfiguration in the next world, as well as requests for long life and good old age. Thus, although specifics are often incorporated — lists of temple offerings and festivals on temple statues (e.g. Assmann, Bommas and Kucharek 2005, 326) — many

texts are little different from those found in other monumental non-royal self-presentations, such as those inscribed in tombs and on stelae. In some sense, they can be 'read away from statues' (Ma 2007, 212): they do not engage with the character of a statue as a bearer of text and a manifestation of individual presence, in the process very deliberately eliding distinctions between statue and referent (with Kjølby 2009, 46).

The use of the first person in these texts in particular blurs these distinctions. A Dynasty 18 black granite block statue of the steward of Memphis and of the treasuries Amenhotep, from the temple of Osiris at Abydos (Fig. 1), includes the following address to Osiris on the front of the knees:

> I have come before you, lord of the district of Poqer,
> that I may make supplications to your *ka* every day,
> that I may give you praises, so that you may be exalted
> [...] so that I may be granted a voice offering of bread and beer,
> cattle and fowl, alabaster and linen
> [...] receiving fillets in the *wag*-festival with green and red linen,
> that I may process (with) the *neshmet*-barque as an efficacious *ba*,
> so that I may not be separated from the following of Horus. (Hall 1914, pl. 38)

Some of these statements are relevant to both statue and referent, such as the receipt of offerings and being in the following of a god, that is, participating in processions (Schulz 1992, II, 707–8). Others seem to refer more specifically to the desired activities of the transfigured person.

Fig. 1: Black granite block statue of Amenhotep from Abydos. Reign of Amenhotep III, Dynasty 18. H. 73.7cm. London, British Museum EA632. © Trustees of the British Museum.

The multiple intersections of voice in Egyptian monuments have often been noted (e.g. Assmann 1972), but they may not receive as much attention as they deserve (see also Nyord 2017, esp. 344–6 with n. 42). As John Baines observes (1999, 37) in connection with tomb biographies, the use of the first person is a way of 'fictionalizing the whole while rendering it immediate and vivid'. We accept that the image we see, the words we read, somehow are those of the person, and yet we know that they are not. In the case of the Amenhotep cited above, the statue's presence and provision in the temple is linked with the transformation of the individual in the next world, and the first-person voice ensures that any distinction between the two is fuzzy (with Rizzo 2004, 518; cf. Kjølby 2009, 42). In contrast, when statues are described, spoken to, or have their own voice in the texts inscribed on them 'the fact of representation' is underlined (Ma 2013, 29–30): their statue-ness is made doubly present. Below I treat some textual and visual puzzles of statue self-reference, puzzles that we generally resolve without thinking about or simply ignore (Ma 2007, 206; 2013, 18).

My focus here is the New Kingdom; comparable ideas were expressed, in somewhat different ways, in earlier periods. Shabti figurines and the complex networks of relations and substitutions their texts generate are an obvious example (Nyord 2017). Captions on some Middle Kingdom temple statues recording their status as royal gifts refer to themselves both obliquely

and directly (e.g. Verbovsek 2004, 190–2). An inscription on the papyrus roll in the lap of the Dynasty 13 scribe statue of the vizier Iymeru set up in Karnak follows the individual's titles with the statement that '(this statue) was made at the command of the Dual King…; the gift of a statue [of this companion] (to be) in the following (*ḥr šms*), in position before (*r bw ḫr*) His Person l.p.h. in the temple of Amun-Re, Lord of the thrones of the Two Lands, foremost of Karnak' (reading following Franke, cited in Kubisch 2008, 321; cf. Verbovsek 2004, 380–1, 384–5). This donation record is written as if read by the statue — it reads out the fact of its own existence (compare Frood 2007, 187–8 with n. 100). It also seems to describe its own position seated beneath a statue or image of its king and donor.

Ekphrasis and presence

I start by returning to the block statue of the royal butler under Amenhotep II Maanakhtef (Fig. 2: Bisson de la Roque 1927, 108–9; Drioton 1927, 49–51; Frood 2013, 182). The statue, of diorite and about half life-size (50cm high), was found in a secondary deposition in the temple of Montu at Medamud. It bears traditional offering formulas addressed to many deities in a tabular format on the front of its knees and a series of vocative addresses concerning Maanakhtef's provision in the next world on its left side. The text on the right is addressed by Maanakhtef to the temple itself, rather than the god or priests:

> O great court of Montu [which is in front of?] its lord,
> may you cause that this *twt*-statue of the royal butler Maanakhtef
> be firm (*rwḏ*) inside the festival court,
>
> that it may breathe (*ssn.f*) myrrh and incense on the flame,
> that it may partake (*pnq.f*) of water flooding (from) the altars
> onto the ground of the court,
>
> that it may eat (*wnm.f*) from what is in the hands of the *wab*-priests
> from the remainder of the divine offerings,
> and see the morning sun in the domain of the one who traverses eternity,
>
> that it may follow its god when he circulates through his temple
> in his festival of that sacred mountain,
> just as I did when I was on earth. (*Urk*. IV, 1483, 7–17; Barbotin 2005, 158)

Fig. 2: Basalt block statue of Maanakhtef from Medamud. Reign of Amenhotep II, Dynasty 18. H. 50cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre E 12926. © Musée du Louvre, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais/Christian Décamps.

My translation here of the third person masculine singular pronoun with 'it' is an artificial way of suggesting that the text is in large part a description of the statue itself as much as the indwelling, manifest presence of Maanakhtef, a fuzziness of reference comparable to that of the first person noted above. Like the Third Intermediate Period examples, the 'sensorium' of the statue is opened up (Winter 2010, 308); the statue, bathed in sunlight, breathes, receives libations, sees and participates in procession. In this it is not unusual: many New Kingdom statues ask that the statue itself do these things (e.g. *Urk*. IV, 1939, 1–10, and see below). But the descriptions in Maanakhtef's text are heightened and extended. The myrrh and incense are thrown

on the flame to burn, capturing the moment when scent is most intense. Water gushes across the floor of the court such that you can almost feel its coolness in contrast to the heat of the sun. The nautical associations of *pnq* 'bailing' (e.g. Parkinson 2012, 102–3) may mean this is less about drinking and more about water pouring over your surface. The statue munches offerings. Mention of its being in the following of its own god (*nṯr.f*: *Urk*. IV, 1483, 15) can be compared with Ramesside inscriptions in which block statue and cult statue speak to each other (see below). This passage also highlights the parallels between them: the cult statue stands in relation to its god just as the statue of Maanakhtef does to its owner.

Later statues are known where one side of the body refers to the owner's transfiguration and the other to the statue (e.g. Luxor J141: Clère 1995, 87–92, pls 6–7; Copenhagen AEIN 584: KRI III, 142, 3–15; Koefoed-Petersen 1950, pl. 78). This patterning makes play with the distinction between person and statue, countering ephemeral with permanent, the human with the monumental, as is explicit in the final triplet comparing the statue's experience with the individual's 'while on earth' (reading with Barbotin 2005, 159, contra Helck: *Urk*. IV, 1483, 17). That Maanakhtef's speech is an appeal to the court of the temple itself is unusual, reinforcing this sense of monumental presence in monumental space. Although I know no other example from before the Late Period (Price 2011b, 181), an address to high officials on a Dynasty 12 stela from Abydos of the chief priest Wepwawetaa (Fig. 3) asks that 'you say a thousand of bread and beer, cattle and fowl, alabaster and linen to the temple of Ra'. The phrase *r rꜣ-pr n rʿ* is arranged in a small column within line seven and is first of a list of gods in this tabulated format. *rꜣ-pr* could refer to a physical space or to this community of gods. Wepwawetaa's inscription also closes with a statement describing the establishment of his statues (*twt* determined with  in the temple and their offerings; these latter clauses are again organised in columns. This emphasises that the whole refers to temple environments.

Maanakhtef's appeal is more explicitly about location. The statue had probably been set up in this 'great court' or 'festival court', an area which Felix Relats Montserrat (pers. comm.) has identified as newly constructed under Thutmose III, perhaps a generation earlier. The statue mobilises the court as a protective place that is positioned to capture the morning sun when it is busy with (hopefully) generous priests. A personal monument speaks to a space and confirms the physicality, and autonomous agency and presence, of both. In this respect, the text is an instance of ekphrasis: 'even at its most visual … [ekphrasis] finds itself straying to the evocative resonances of the other senses: sound, smell, taste, and touch' (Bartsch and Elsner 2007, ii). The visualised presence is turned out towards the environment, as in many of the statue texts I discuss. Relatively few statue texts from before the 1st millennium turn inward to describe their own bodies in a developed way.

Texts about statues

Most non-royal statues from before the Third Intermediate Period that talk about their own actions or presence are more allusive or prosaic than Maanakhtef's. Short formulas relating to statue presence and function include, for example, a caption that is often prominently sited, especially down the centre of the robe of standing or seated poses, requesting that 'all that comes forth from the offering table' of a god be for the individual, or in some cases for his statue (e.g. Weber 2014, fig. 12, 122). These are condensed confirmations of a primary function of statues, to participate in the reversal of offerings (Rizzo 2004), and the locations in ideally more visible areas relates to involvement and interactions with audiences.

These often elliptical texts alluding to statue presence can be compared with those that refer to it specifically. The most basic are short requests in addresses or offering formulas, asking that the statue endure (*mn*) and/or, like Maanakhtef's, be firm (*rwḏ*) in the temple or tomb so that it may receive offerings and see the god, or enjoy other comparable benefits. Such references to the statue on its surface are attested from the 3rd millennium onward (e.g. Verbovsek 2004, 315–16, 444–6; for Dynasty 18, Barta 1968, 100, no. 153; 127, no. 153). They are particularly frequent, and occasionally highly elaborate, in the Ramesside period. The back pillar of a kneeling statue from the Karnak Cachette of the high priest of Amun Paser, who was also vizier under Sety I and Ramesses II, bears an offering formula addressed to Amun-Ra-Horakhty-Atum requesting 'that I may place my *twt*-statue enduringly and permanently (*mn rwḏ*), seeing Amun daily' (KRI III, 293, 1–2). These requests are closely related to the common one that the owner's name remain in the

Fig. 3: Limestone stela of Wepwawetaa from Abydos. Reign of Amenemhat II, Dynasty 12. H. 136cm. Munich, Staatliches Museum Ägyptischer Kunst Gl. WAF 35.

temple or tomb, as on another statue of Paser: 'May you (Amun-Ra) cause that my name be firm (*rwḏ*) in your temple, that I may receive offerings from your presence and smell the incense of your giving' (Van Dijk 1993, 122–3, n. 44; KRI III, 19, 1).

Some of the most distinctive examples of such phraseology are on black granite and limestone block statues of the late Dynasty 19 high priest of Amun Roma, also called Roy, from the Karnak Cachette (Frood 2007, 48–54). The biographical text on the left side of the body of the black granite statue culminates with a request that the king, or possibly Amun, 'place my *ḫnty*-statue enduringly (*mn*) for eternity on the land of his domain perpetually, that Amun may address (*wšd*) it in his every festival, my name enduring (*mn*) upon it perpetually' (KRI IV, 209, 1–2). An appeal to the living on the back pillar demands that temple staff give it garlands and perform offering rituals for it (KRI IV, 209, 11–14). Almost every panel of text on the limestone statue refers to the statue. That on the front asks that Amun and his entourage 'place my *ḫnty*-statue enduringly and permanently, resting in Karnak forever' (KRI IV 129, 4–5), while that on the right side requests that Amun 'cause that my name endures upon my *ḫnty*-statue' (KRI IV, 130, 9). The offering formula on the back pillar focuses around the life of the statue in the temple, requesting that:

> my *ḫnty*-statue endures on earth,
> my name being visibly carved[2] upon it for eternity […]
> that Amun may address (*wšd*) it each time he appears
> and Mut and Khonsu assent (*hn*) to it more than the great ones. (KRI IV, 130, 13–5)

These 'great ones' (*wrw*) probably make a self-deprecating, yet competitive, comment on the presence of Roma's statue in a group of other non-royal statues. The language of these verses, especially *hn*, 'to assent', refers to oracular practices (cf. Frood 2007, 184; and Clère 1995, 188–9 where *hn* also describes statue interactions). The 'great ones' could at the same time be living officials participating in oracular consultations (cf. Clère 1995, 182–3), incorporating the statue as one actor among living human actors.

Autonomous statue presence is emphasised at the most detailed levels (with Schulz 1992, II, 709). In a request for its endurance (*mn*) inscribed on a Dynasty 20 naophorous block statue from the Karnak Cachette, *twt* is determined with a block statue.[3] Regine Schulz (1992, II, 701, n.3) notes this example as prefiguring the use of the block statue determinative for *twt* and *ḥsy* on 1st millennium statues (Price 2011b, 160–1). Although such uses were ancient (e.g. Newberry and Fraser 1894, pls 12, 14), it is the detail of statue on statue that is striking here. Another example is a Ramesside sistrophorous block statue of an Amenemhat, perhaps from Deir el-Medina, bearing an offering formula to Hathor on its left side asking 'that my name endure in her chapel, (my) memory endure in her shrine', with *sḫꜣ* 'memory' determined by a block statue.[4] These are literal matters of substance and material presence.

Minmose: speaking and spoken to

The Ramesside high priest's statue texts about statues are highly participatory. The oracular language of his texts implies two-way interaction and response, in this case with gods in their statue forms. Such an interactive role asserts an agency comparable with Gell's relational model. Here, the most explicit examples are intermediary statues that speak in the first person, which they delineate to some extent from the person of the owner. This strategy can be termed prosopopoeia, a type of ekphrasis (Bahrani 2014, 194; cf. Svenbro 1993, 41–42).

Statues that offer to speak with gods on behalf of people are first attested in the New Kingdom and are not common (Kjølby 2009, 41, with n. 59; Otto 1948; cf. Fischer-Elfert and Grimm 2003: a Middle Kingdom statue that mediates with the dead). The best-known examples are on scribe statues of Amenhotep son of Hapu from the reign of Amenhotep III:

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[2] *ḫtj* has determinatives of an eye and a blade.

[3] The Karnak Cachette database includes excellent photographs: <http://www.ifao.egnet.net/bases/cachette/?id=421> [last accessed6/7/2018].

[4] Clère 1995, 119–23, esp. n. a and pl. 15c; Price 2011b, 160. Such usages may be relatively widespread. An appeal on a naophorous statue of Hormin, overseer of the Memphis *jpt* under Sety I, is addressed to 'those who will see this  ', as given in Kitchen's copy text (KRI I, 314, 15), which must be read as a word for statue.

> Perform an offering which the king gives for (me)
> and libate for me from what you have.
> I am a herald (*wḥmw*) whom the king appointed
> in order to hear the petitions of the humble,
> in order to bring forward matters of the Two Lands. (*Urk*. IV, 1833, 17–19)

These texts use the first person to speak as the statue, setting out its role as a distinct agent within a defined social environment and claiming a particular set of social transactions (e.g. Galán 2003; Salvador 2014). Intermediary statues of the Ramesside period are visually and textually more complex, as exemplified by the begging 'bald ones' (*j3s*/*js*) gathered and studied by Jacques Jean Clère (1995), together with their Dynasty 18 precursors (also Franke 1988). Most bald ones speak with the statue's voice at some point, and a number unusually call attention to their distinctive form, asking for their bald heads to be anointed and their cupped hands to be filled (e.g. Frood 2007, 189–91; 2015).

One of the most vivid examples of this body-centred ekphrasis belonged to the high priest of Onuris Minmose, who held office under Ramesses II (Egyptian Museum, Cairo CG 1203: Clère 1995, 73–80, doc. A; surviving height 66cm). Although it is unprovenanced, it may have been set up somewhere at Abydos like so many of Minmose's monuments (Effland and Effland 2004, 6). This now headless red granite, roughly life-size statue shows him kneeling with a Hathor-headed sistrum on his knees. His left hand is placed on the side of the emblem's wig, while his right is above it, palm raised and cupped beneath where his mouth would have been. An inscription in twenty-one columns envelops him, beginning on the right side of the sistrum and finishing on the left with a cryptographic writing of his name. It reads continuously around his body, including two columns on the back pillar, and is indiscriminately carved on the wig of the sistrum, the rear surfaces of Minmose's shoulders and arms, and his feet.

After a list of titles, the text begins, as on many bald ones, with the statue speaking: 'I am the bald one of Isis the great; I live in her open court' (cols 3–4). Both here and later, *js* is written with a determinative of a kneeling man holding a sistrum. This is the only example of this variant determinative in Clère's corpus (1995, 21, 217). The distinctive orthography mirrors the statue's form at a detailed level, and a similar mirroring is developed in the text.

The following stanzas describe the offerings, mostly drinks, that Minmose desires, commanding an audience to have them 'placed upon my arms, my mistress kept fast (*smn*) in my(?) embrace' (cols 6–7), thus indicating where the offerings were to be poured (Rizzo 2004, 515–17), while the sistrum is held in its arms. There follows an unmarked shift of voice to a speech placed in the mouth of the viewer/offering bringer and probably addressed at least partly to the statue (with Clère 1995, 76): 'take for yourself *snw*-loaves and date-wine to your mouth … given to the mouth of (Min)mose, true of voice, and to the bald one of Isis' (cols 9–11).

The statue then resumes its speech, addressing 'everyone in the court, noblewomen as much as anyone' (cols 12–13), drawing attention to its probably bald head as well as other details of physical form:

> Anoint the servant of Isis;
> there is oil for it, on its head (*tp.f*).
> Look [the image?] of my lady is carved on my head (*ḏ3ḏ3.j*);
> look, she is at my throat as amulets (*wḏ3w)*,
> its [the statue's] right hand receiving them [offerings?],
> my left keeping fast the sublime sistrum of its mistress. (cols 13–16)

I follow Ute and Andreas Effland (2004, 12) in reading '*the image or name* of my lady' in the damaged passage in the first verse here, suggesting that a lacuna after *mk* gives enough space for another group (with KRI III, 471, 2a; not noted by Clère). It is difficult to know what this name/image might have been, as is true also of the amulets (*wḏ3w)* in the next verse. An amulet around the neck is difficult to imagine because of the position of the right hand in front of the mouth (cf. Clère 1995, 141, fig. 50), although possible, comparing, for example, begging statues that hold menats (e.g. Clère 1995, 114–8, doc G). But no traces are indicated on the photographs published by Clère or in his discussion. Clère (1995, 78, n. p) considered that the carving on the head referred to its baldness. Effland and Effland suggest that both the carving and the amulets are cryptograms of Min and/or Osiris, as attested on other statues of Minmose, reading against the female determinative of *nb*, thus 'my lord'. Carving of images and texts on the heads of statues is occasionally attested before the Late Period (e.g. Guichard 2014, 260, cat. 293; Frood in prep.-a), so an image of Isis, or her name, could have been present on the head. Although the referents for this ekphrasis are necessarily uncertain, and a match between what is mentioned and what was depicted probably did not have to be exact in any case, its effects are powerful: this is about the body, its needs, its adornments, its musical performances, its visual impact.

The shift to the third person with 'its right hand', although perhaps an error, is very much in keeping with the shifting perspectives across the statue. The text closes with statements of Isis' benevolence and mercy, followed by another unmarked shift to address the statue that it should receive oils and libations for the *ka* of Minmose. Here the change in voice opens up to this indwelling aspect. The statue has an autonomous presence as an *js*, and through it plays a part in the roles of mediator and musician.

'Bald one' was not a title held in life by Minmose or other owners of these statues. The same is true of the designation of Amenhotep son of Hapu as a *wḥmw* (Price 2011b, 20; Clère 1968, 143–4), which is frequently held by bald one statues, along with the doorkeeper titles (*jry-ʿ3*) that are known from Ramesside 'doorstop' statues (Clère 1968; 1995, 13). These objects, with their projecting doorstop elements, also speak in the first person to declare their place and role as guardians of temple doorways. As Vincent Rondot (2011, 145) observes in his brilliant study of this statue type, ordinary block statues that do not have the projecting feature could have, probably often symbolically, performed the same function.

'Watchman' (*wršy*) seems to be a comparable designation that evokes this role. A text on the left side of a block statue of a charioteer of Ramesses II named Merenptah, from Tell Nabasha, speaks as the statue, describing its position: 'I am at the side of the august stairway of my lady (Wadjet)', and requesting offerings and libations 'for the watchman (*p3 wršy*) (of) Merenptah'.[5] Similarly, a column on a lost fragment of a back pillar belonging to the viceroy of Nubia Setau under Ramesses II, recorded by Lepsius near the temple of Amenhotep III at Elkab, includes the statement 'I am your watchman (*wršy).k*) who is in this temple'. This comes after a broken reference to 'your *ḫnty*-statue' and a reference to 'your sublime god' follows, so the passage is probably part of an address to the deified king.[6]

Statues can speak and can bear titles of their own. In at least a couple of cases they mention having their own names, as is well attested for royal statues (e.g. Donohue 1988, 118–23) but rare for non-royal ones (cf. Bahrani 2014, 210). Examples are an appeal on the statue of Didia which asks for recitation of 'the name of this statue' (*rn n twt pn*: KRI VII, 25, 9–10; Frood 2007, 134) and a text in the Saqqara tomb of Mose that requests offerings for his *ḫnty*-statue, 'its name enduring forever and ever, carved for perpetuity' (KRI III, 422, 7–8; Gaballa 1977, 13–14, pl. 28). These statues are at once the person and something more than and different from that. Their owners take on identities that may be unconnected with their biographies, as with two monuments of the mid-Dynasty 18 soldier Amenemheb Mahu, which present him as a 'singer with the harp of Amun' (Baines forthcoming) and with the representation of very high-ranking people, such as Iymeru and Amenhotep son of Hapu (above) as well as princes during Dynasty 4, as scribes. In the latter case at least, they are scribes for the king, so the essential element that gives them meaning is implied but not present, and thus they are examples of this sort of distributed role-play from at the least the early 3rd millennium.[7] Minmose seems to have liked role-plays: he also dedicated a doorstop statue (Clère 1968) and one of himself grinding grain (Frood in prep.-b). Prominent people commissioned numerous statues in a range of iconographies and roles, providing a point of departure for the verbalised realisations found in them.

Minmose's bald statue is distinctive in the way it mixes voice. Statements addressed to the statue on the statue, often in the voice of the owner but here seemingly in the voice of a viewer, are not common. The most discussed are those running around the base of the Dynasty 19 statue of the overseer of the treasury Panehsy.[8] That on the right half presents the statue's role in the social sphere (with Ockinga 1984, 57), addressing '(my) *snn*-image' and asking that it receives bouquets and offerings, 'and then my *ba* will come

[5] KRI III, 247, 16–248, 1; Schulz 1992, I, 439–40, II, pls 116a–d, cat. no. 260, with references. The back pillar includes, in a damaged context, phrases that might be part of an address to the statue: 'May the subjects extend their arms to you, in sight of (*ḫr-ḥr*: lit. 'beneath the face of') Merenptah', perhaps referring to his own, now erased, image which was carved on the front of the statue's knees, as well as the statue itself.

[6] LD III, 174; LDT IV, 42; KRI III, 82, 7. My thanks to Vivian Davies, Christine Raedler, and, especially, Susanne Woodhouse for discussion of this fragment and the fragments of a statue base of Setau also from Elkab and often, perhaps rightly, associated with it (KRI III, 82, 8–11).

[7] My thanks to John Baines for this point.

[8] London, British Museum EA 1377. Much cited and discussed, including Otto 1948, 464 n. 2; Ockinga 1984, 57; Schulz 1992, II 704–5; Van Dijk 1993, 122–3; Assmann 2003; Assmann, Bommas and Kucharek 2005, 330–1; Frood 2007, 166–70.

fluttering, so that he may receive offerings with you' (Bierbrier 1982, pls 49–51), rather as on Minmose's statue. The inscription on the left is more transcendent: 'O my *ḫnty*-statue, you are here before the lords of the sacred land; place yourself as the memory of my name in the domain of the lords of Tawer, for you are here for me as a refuge (?: *jnht*); you are my true *ḏt*-body'. Parallels for the opening verses are known from the back pillar of a naophorous block statue of a treasurer of the Ramesseum Khay from Saqqara: 'O my *ḫnty*-statue, you are in the place of truth beside the lord of the gods; place yourself as the memory of my name in the presence of Wenennefer' (Schulz 1992, I, 191–2, esp. n. 6 with refs). Metaphors of monuments, including statues, as memorials are well attested, so that much here is traditional (see Ockinga 1984, 53–6, with n. 9). What is striking, and perhaps relatively new, is the voicing of the idea as an address to the statue.

This act asserts a statue's materiality and its separateness. Another example is an address running in a single column down the lap and between the legs of the colossal statue of the Dynasty 20 third priest of Amun Amenemope from the rock-cut group in his Theban tomb: 'O my *twt*-statue of stone (*jnr)* of my city, may I be firm (*rwḏ)* … that my name be remembered upon your (sur)face *(ḥr ḥr.k)*'.[9] Here physical impact is heightened by the mentions of fabric and surface, in addition to the scale and 'dominating presence' of the statue itself (Ockinga 2009, 33, 56 n. 139). Boyo Ockinga compares the passage with funerary texts which address the Theban mountain and request that it opens to conceal the body, emphasising the living, transcendent quality of the stone (Rummel 2016): stone as body, statue as body and divinised flesh.

These texts fit with approaches to statues as 'personhood distributed or extended in the milieu, beyond the body boundary' (Kjølby 2009, 35). There is something distinctive here beyond the marking of agency. Rather than deferring reference to the statue and thereby opening up the 'tranquil paradox' of statue presence and personal absence (Ma 2007, 205–6; 2013, 28), these texts assert the statue's presence, its 'hereness' (Svenbro 1993, 42–3), which is both closely related to and distinct from the referent. The intermediaries encompass possibilities of representation from role-play to statue as a separate presence, as with *ṣalmu* in Bahrani's analysis. The composers and designers of statues knew the myriad complexities of images, as well as the range of qualities and potentials that statues possessed, some of which we now label as agency.

Paser's bodies

Statues of the vizier Paser have been mentioned in this discussion. Many of them are inscribed with both traditional and playful examples of statue ekphrasis, and his tomb contains a scene in which he makes a speech about the creation of statues (Assmann 1992). I conclude with the one that is most elaborate in relation to this discussion, a schist standing statue dedicated in the Ptah temple at Memphis (Fig. 4: PM III, 2, 838; KRI III, 11–13). Like Roma's statues, it mentions or alludes to itself almost everywhere, and like Panehsy's, it makes play with material and transcendent aspects of statue self and body. When complete, it was about two-thirds life-size (surviving H. 62cm including a high base). It shows him standing behind a tall plinth which bore an effigy-form figure of Ptah in front of a djed. Only the lower part of the vizier's body survives, from the top of the thighs down to his sandalled feet, as well as the tips of his fingers held against the djed.

The inscriptions were edited by Ramadan el-Sayed (1980), and I largely follow his treatment here (page numbers refer to his article). A dedication formula is inscribed on the top of the base, in front of the right foot: 'made by the senior scribe of Paser for his lord' (209). This dedication may have continued on the lost section of the base in front of the left foot, and the fact of dedication may influence other features, in particular the vivid description of the statue body which relates it closely to the transfigured body of Paser. I focus on the inscriptions on two main areas: the plinth of the Ptah statue and the back pillar, although there are allusions to statues elsewhere. For example, the text running down the right side of the *djed* behind the Ptah statue refers specifically to it — '... your *tjt*-image, South of his Wall, that you may give to (me) all life and

[9] Ockinga 2009, 55–6 (text 21), pls 14–15, 71. The reading of *ḥr.k* as '(sur)face' follows Ockinga 2009, 56. It is uncommented there but lovely.

[10] El-Sayed notes a small lacuna followed by 'before me (*ḫr.j*)', but this reading is questionable in context and I am unable to verify it.

dominion …'.[10] The column on the left uses a conventional formula to request that 'you cause my name to be firm (*rwḏ*) in your temple' (209), referring to Paser's own statue, and enforcing the relationship of dependence between the two.

The two offering formulas on the plinth are the most visually prominent texts, and they draw attention through their organisation and symmetrical layout (as set out by Borchardt 1925, 177, contra el-Sayed 1980, 210). The formulas radiate out in a line at the top of the plinth from a shared central *ḥtp*. The texts then continue with a shared central column that starts with Tatenen, directly beneath *ḥtp*. This shared column includes the only known example of epithets describing Tatenen and the gods associated with him as 'ones who lengthen lifetimes, and feed those in the underworld' (LGG VI, 206, 385). Their prominent, repeating position may be a virtuoso compositional display, as are many of the rare and distinctive orthographies in the texts (el-Sayed 1980, 215, 231). The section that fans out from the statue's right in five columns alludes to the full trajectory of life to afterlife evoked in the epithets:

> An offering which Ptah, South of his Wall,
> sublime *djed*, foremost of the Tjenenet, gives to
> Tatenen, great one of the council of gods, foremost of the domain of Ptah,
> those who lengthen lifetimes and feed those in the underworld,
>
> that they may grant a long lifetime extolling him (Ptah),[11]
> veneration when (they) receive abundance,
> contentment through food-offerings,
> rejoicing in sustenance,
> until the reckoning of a lifetime to its hour;
>
> voice offerings after interment
> from what has come forth from the presence of the gods,
> anointing the body (*nms ḥʿw)* with the finest sacred oil,
> as the remainder from the *ḏsr*-incense of the portico;
>
> receiving pure garments provided with bands(?),
> and clothing imbued with the god's body;
> for the *ka* of the city governor, vizier,
> Paser, true of voice. (el-Sayed 1980, 210)

I follow el-Sayed (1980, 215) in reading *nms* and *ḏsr* as words for anointing and incense, meanings that seem to be attested otherwise only from the Graeco-Roman period. These are appropriate to context, and are supported by the vessel determinative for *nms* and the substance determinative for *ḏsr*. They are extensions of and plays upon the more normal meanings of *nms* 'to clothe' and *ḏsr* as something sacred and set apart. Such poetic phrasing highlights the salience of Paser's body (*ḥʿw*) in the transformation described, all effects intensified by the description of the clothing which follows.

The 'pure garments' (*wʿbw*) are said to be provided or adorned (*ḏbȝ)* with *wnfw,* which el-Sayed renders 'fringes', perhaps a mixed orthography of *wnḫw*, which can refer to bands of linen and types of clothing more generally. The phrasing may refer to patterns of folding and wrapping, in connection with the cord determinative of *wnfw* (el-Sayed 1980, pl. 48b) and its

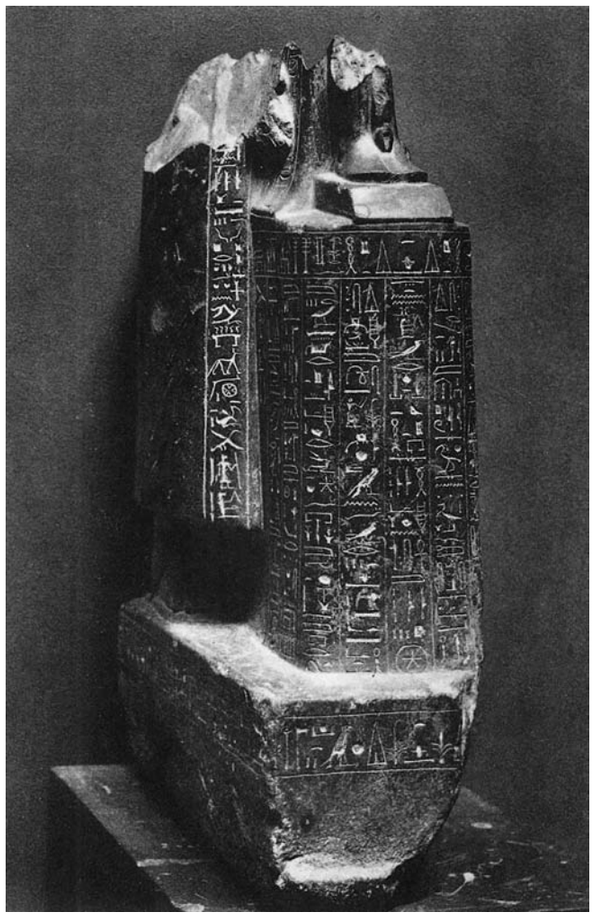


Fig. 4: Schist standing statue of Paser from Memphis. Reign of Ramesses II, Dynasty 19. H. 62cm. Cairo, Egyptian Museum CG 630, after Borchardt 1925, pl. 116.

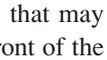
[11] El-Sayed reads *.sn* for *sw* here: 'that they grant (Paser) a long lifetime celebrating them (the gods).' The substitution of *sw* thus allows for the sportive writing of *swȝš*:  I suggest instead that *sw* remain in the singular as a reference to Ptah.

association with covering (Wilson 1997, 234). It is perhaps possible that *ḏbȝ* 'to replace (one thing for another)' (e.g. Parkinson 2012, 65) could be understood here as referring to the tearing up of cloth to create strips for the wrapping of mummies and statues. The following line may also refer to such reuse of temple linens, including cloth that had been used to wrap temple statues (Riggs 2014, 121), the 'god's body (*ḥʿw-nṯr*)'.[12] All the different words for textiles here have associations with temples, priestly clothing and ritual (el-Sayed 1980, 215–16). They can also be compared with how arrangements of cloth on the bodies of Late Period statues are referred to in their texts (e.g. Klotz 2014, 298).

The text cascades visual images in a way that may allude to the presence of the god's body in front of the statue, as well as the future shrouded and decorated corpse of the vizier, while also evoking the body as a site of representation, as in the statue itself. Although the goal of the text is the transfiguration of the body after death, the mentions of reversion of offerings, the *sbḫt*, a protective gateway structure attested in the underworld and in temples (Spencer 1984, 161–690), and of cultic textiles all relate to temple settings. The use of the neutral third person imparts a generalising quality, opening up associations between the wrapped, divinised human body, the bound, effigy-form statuette of Ptah above the text, and the statue of Paser in his enveloping vizier's cloak: 'the layering of materials freighted with meaning — wood, metal and cloth for cult statues; bones, flesh (real or otherwise), and wrappings for the dead — made an image that represented a god on earth and that required all the attendant care of ritual and seclusion' (Riggs 2014, 106).

Bones and flesh are particularly relevant for the flanking text on the left side of the plinth, which describes the statue directly after the partly repeated offering formula to Osiris, Nefertem, Horus, and Tatenen:

> that they place my *ḫnty*-statue in this shelter,
> that they transfigure its *ba* and raise up (its?) *sʿḥ*,
> that they permit it to stand as an *akh* as before,
> and place its head (*tp.f*) upon its bones (*qsw.f*),
> that they purify it through their action
> with pure water which comes from Elephantine,
> and natron from Elkab, the divine efflux,
> so that when they integrate its *ḥʿw*-body before them,
> its *ḏt*-body will always be before the great Ennead in Heliopolis. (el-Sayed 1980, 216)

This is the only certain use of the first person (written with ) in the surviving inscriptions; this may relate, in part, to its dedication for Paser by a third party. So its use here makes it clear that the body treated is that of the statue. The choice of words is more conventional than on the right text, although numerous assonances heighten its effect (e.g. *sȝḫ.sn-bȝ.f sṯs.sn-sʿḥ(.f) sʿḥʿ.sn-s(w) m-ȝḫ tpt-ʿ*). It begins by stressing physical location — this  — resonating with Maanakhtef's address to the temple court and Panehsy's characterisation of his statue as a refuge.

The description of the statue's transformation that follows uses ancient formulas concerned with the reconstitution of deceased human and divine bodies (el-Sayed 1980, 218–19). The next example of these formulas that I know in relation to a statue concerns the *twt*-statue-body on the base of a standing statue of Montuemhat from the Karnak Cachette which asks that Montu place 'its head upon its bones' (with el-Sayed 1980, 219 n. k). A number of statue texts use biological metaphors for the statue body, employing fleshy words such as *ḥʿw* (Rizzo 2004, 518). Another of Paser's statues from the Ptah temple asks that Ptah 'make my body (*ḥʿw*) firm when raising up your perfection, my arms shouldering your person every day' (KRI VII, 407, 13–15), an ideal description of the statue itself kneeling and holding a figure of the god.[13] 'Perfection (*nfrw*)' here also means the body. The early Dynasty 20 stela of the high priest of Amun Bakenkhons, which describes the devastation wrought on statues at Karnak, refers to them as having fallen 'on their sides (*ḏrww*)', 'on their backs (*psdw*)', and 'on their noses (*fndw*)', all written with bodily determinatives, especially  (Boraik 2007, 122, fig. 1, l. 6–7). A century earlier, Paser's statue too pushes these metaphors very far.

Discussing the formula 'the ba to the sky, the corpse to the underworld, your *ḫntyw*-statues among the

[12] My thanks to John Baines for this suggestion, and to Christina Riggs for discussion.

[13] Wilson 2010, 150–1, no. 48. Captions that describe the divine images held or raised up by statues — Edith Bernhauer's 'kultbezogener Vermerk' (2010, 131–2) — are one of the few types that regularly refer to physical appearance, although often elliptically (e.g. Van Dijk 1983; examples cited by Klotz and Leblanc 2012, 675 n. 158).

favoured' on Dynasty 18 and Late Period statues, Assmann, Bommas and Kucharek suggest a tripartite division of the self according to environment, in support of the temple statue as substitute body (2005, 321–31, esp. 329–30; cf. Rizzo 2004, 518–19). Like the human body, Paser's standing statue has the potential for multiple manifestations that cannot be neatly divided into components. *sʿḥ*, a word for statues in later texts (e.g. Price 2011b, 231–38; Frood 2013, 180–81), encompasses its wrapped, divinised nature, and *ḏt* its capacity for indwelling, as on Panehsy's statue (Assmann 2003; Riggs 2014, 86, 99–100). But unlike Panehsy's text, in which the statue is a perch for the fluttering ba, Paser's statue has its own ba and akh. And its akh is 'as before', referring to another phase of existence, maybe Paser's life. The absence of an *n kȝ n* formula at the end of the text shows that it is the statue that stands before the gods in all its transfigured, divinised potential.

The arrangement of the inscription in three columns on the back pillar is also complex. The right-hand column is autonomous, referring to being 'in his presence', followed by a title string. The central and left column read together and close with a very rare Ramesside example of something close to the full 'Saite formula' (p. 224; also Raedler 2004, 332–3 with n. 270 for a monumental shabti of Paser bearing the formula). This formula, which is attested from the early New Kingdom onward and common in Dynasty 26, refers to the city god's protection of the individual/statue and often refers to the statue as *jwny*. Karl Jansen-Winkeln (2000) has concluded that the formula was connected with the consecration of statues in temples, whereas David Klotz's (2016) convincing reassessment of Dynasty 18 examples relates it more to their role in performances. The lost opening of Paser's text probably included a reference to the city god or Ptah, and was followed by an enumeration of Paser's epithets and titles. The text continues with a request, probably to that god, to 'place yourself around him, in front of his ka, in his presence; he is a *jwny* true of voice [...]' (el-Sayed 1980, 224). I follow Klotz here (2016, 209), rendering *dj* as an imperative (rather than Jansen-Winkeln's passive), through which 'the dedicant essentially demands the City God stop as he passes by' in procession.

Unlike Klotz's Dynasty 18 examples, in which the ka is the god's statue (see Jansen-Winkeln 2000, 92–3 for a Ramesside example), the ka in Paser's text is his own, as on many Late Period statues. Whereas Klotz understands the ka as the dedicant's statue that is situated in the presence of his own ba who is travelling in the god's procession, such a complicated explanation is not required for Paser, whose ka is simply his own statue in the presence of the god's. Klotz (2016, 211) understands *jwny* as 'the Heliopolitan', referring to the statue as a form of Osiris. In Paser's case the epithet extends the transfigurations undergone by self and statue through the texts ranged over its plinth. On the back pillar, the final groups at the bottom of the central column write *jwny pw mȝʿ-ḫrw*, framed by Paser's name which closes the columns on either side, especially  (the *sr* element of his name), which is repeated immediately below, with  closing the offering formulas that wrap around the base (el-Sayed 1980, pl. 49b). So the divinised statue is surrounded and watched over by a component of Paser's name that approximates the form of the statue. This text and its visual plays perhaps complete the many manifestations of the statue developed throughout the texts. It is tempting to consider this an address to the figure of Ptah that Paser holds. Not only does this formula assert the agency of the city god and the deceased (Klotz 2016), it also proclaims the distinct and separate presence of his own statue. The statue is what matters.

These are vivid, complex descriptions of a statue. As on Minmose's statue, the texts and their orthographies draw attention to the physical, in this case almost flesh and bone, presence of the statue, as well as evoking its transcendent qualities in complex relationship to Paser's divinised self; in this respect, it can be compared with Panehsy's text. This treatment opens up a different sort of 'tranquil paradox' from that of Ma discussed earlier, here between the obvious stone form and the biological metaphors of humanness and ephemerality that play out across it. Self and statue are not completely integrated; nor is one substituted for the other.

Statue selves and statue audiences

Statues have distinct and multiple intersecting ontologies. They are manifestations and role-plays of the person they represent, of whom they can describe themselves as substitutes and extensions in a wide variety of ways. As Schulz (1992, II, 705) suggests for Panehsy, they are objects of memory and convergence ('Annäherung'). But they are also things apart. And as Bahrani argues, awareness of this separateness is at the heart of the human creation of images. For Egyptian

statues from before the 2nd millennium, this separation is manifest mainly in form and in the position and orientation of their inscriptions, rather than in their content. A vivid example of the former is Idu's statue pushing itself up through the floor of his Dynasty 6 tomb (Simpson 1976, pl. 29 a–c; cf. Franke 1988). I have not focused on the forms of the statues, as against the interplay of form with the texts inscribed on them. Ultimately, forms and poses, from the open mouths and begging postures of the bald-one statues to the cult objects they often hold, convey the fundamental meaning. The texts build upon that meaning and can express nuances that go beyond visual form, in particular to address wider dimensions of time, space and mode of being.

An 'opposition of person/image' (Bahrani 2003, 123) is set out in these statue texts. Many of the compositions I discuss are making play with the alternate possibilities that Bahrani indicates with '/' and cross its boundary. Some of what the statue texts assert can be characterised as agency in Gell's terms: many of the statues are strongly 'social animals'. But I agree with Bahrani's criticism of Gell's model (Bahrani 2014, 201):

> If we use expressions like the ascription of agency, we are separating these as elements apart from the thing. Agency is, then, an element that can be isolated and analysed, categorised in a different way from the work or the thing, the object or the work of art. … really the point here is that these are things with a different status. They are parts of ontologies and technologies that are different from those we take as being logical and rational, but they are nevertheless real and even logical.

We have thus to be more open to complexity and nuance in analysing what statues do. Egyptian concepts of the person are multiple and shifting; thus they always offer the potential to be understood creatively and anew. Those who created these statues knew this; they were deeply aware of potentials of monuments and reflected upon what to us are philosophical questions of image-making (see Nyord 2017). Such reflections are part of the wider dynamics of monument creation and the perpetual push towards innovation. As Bahrani (2003, 133) observes '[i]mage making and portrayal through substitute images were therefore quite literally dependent upon *writing presence*'. Unlike the Hellenistic world, where a whole genre of epigrams explores the hermeneutic problems in viewing and understanding images (Ma 2013, 16), we have these sorts of things on the statues themselves. From block statue and musician determinatives to Paser's texts thematising the myriad ways a statue could be conceptualised, composers were writing presence in new ways.

Ekphrasis by its nature draws attention to the viewer or reader, their voice, presence and subjectivity (cf. Bartsch and Elsner 2007, ii). In the case of the begging statues this addressing of the viewer is particularly punchy. So far in this essay I have only alluded to audience. A significant part of Svenbro's and Ma's discussions of statues relates to their encounter with audiences, and how the grammar and voice of the dedicatory formulas relate to the voice of someone who would read them out. For Egyptian material, it is difficult to model how far it was possible to read/declaim inscriptions from the statues themselves, especially since access to the temples in which the material I discuss was set up was probably quite restricted, even if to relatively high concentrations of literate people. Oral performances at creation and/or dedication would have been crucial for the individual and his group, and probably also for the artists and workshops (Baines 2007, 152; Kjølby 2007, I, 96–7). But outside these contexts? Were they ever read again once they were set up? Many statue texts are at least presented as if they might be.

The intermediary scribe statues of Amenhotep son of Hapu are somewhat paradoxical in this. The statue reads and writes, activities that seem for and of itself. The papyrus held on its lap is oriented to the statue as if written by it and to be read by it, giving a sense that it is engaged in a self-contained activity for which no other human is required or desired, unless he is reading aloud to us. This is quite in contrast with the outward perspective of the text on the base which identifies and speaks to a diverse human audience. These 'reading' effects were understood by Jean Yoyotte (1981) as one of a number of 'attention grabbing devices', including the bald ones' demanding gestures (also Lorand 2016, 237; and see Price, this volume). This may be a productive way of thinking about part of the purpose of these ingenious elaborations in context. The examples I have discussed come from temples, which by the late 2nd millennium were probably becoming cluttered with statues (e.g. Kjølby 2007, I, 40–7). For the southern processional route at Karnak, Chiara Salvador (pers. comm.) imagines that people who walked down the paved, axial pathway through the courts could have been attracted to step off and wander through the displays of statues that were probably set up on either side. Decorum restricted possible forms here — no begging bald ones are known from Karnak before the

Late Period — so other strategies were brought into play, including things like the texts I discuss.

Despite the superficial frontality of statues, texts wrap around. To read Minmose's statue it is necessary to walk around it and look very closely to see the musician determinative of *js*; you have to look at the back of Paser's statue to see the framing of *jwny*, the divinised statue, by his name. The idea that most statues were pushed up against walls and inaccessible may be influenced a little too much by the modern experience of the museum (cf. Evans 2012, 77–88 in relation to early Mesopotamian statues). Those who, like Paser and Minmose, had multiple statues might further display their status by commissioning unusual texts, and they or their audiences might also show their learnedness by identifying a distinctive statue and stopping to read its texts. Some 1st millennium statues claim that their owners 'called out the names of all statues that I passed by' in the temple (Klotz 2015, 85–6). So some statues probably became well known.

If you were reading, then the effects of ekphrasis could have been quite startling, perhaps forcing you to think differently about the nature of the object in front of you, or perhaps simply forcing you to think, pay attention, react. How could a stone statue be flesh and bone, as a flesh and bone body is transformed into a statue (Riggs 2014, 99–110)? Statues and statue texts, from the very earliest periods, manage their manifestations and interactions — human, divine and their own distinct status, statue-ness, within that continuum — in complex and diverse ways. The New Kingdom examples treated here demonstrate this complexity, and the fluidity and multiplicity of the selves they represent and present.

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