



ALEXEY K. VINOGRADOV



GODS IN BOOTS


(A *Post Scriptum* TO ‘THE MANY-EYED *Thinker* FROM MEROE’)¹.

In my article, published in the previous volume of the *MittSAG*, I discussed a curious drawing (incised on an ivory inlay found in grave Beg. W 127 at Meroe)² depicting a many-eyed person. In reviewing what I had said, I noticed that I might have elaborated some points with a greater thoroughness, and I thus take this opportunity to make a few additional remarks.

Discussing the iconography of the portrayed person (nicknamed by me *the Thinker*, due to its striking resemblance in posture to Auguste Rodin’s statue *le Penseur*), and mainly concentrating on his *many-eyedness*, which made him resemble the god Dionysus/Bacchus/Osiris as portrayed by Plutarch and Diodorus (apart from the images of the mythological “all-seeing Argos” on some Graeco-Roman vases), I probably should have more strongly drawn the reader’s attention to another peculiarity of the same drawing: the fact that the person depicted is *shod in sandals*, whereas the deities in the monuments of Egyptian and Ancient Sudanese visual art are normally shown *bare-footed*.

Does this undermine the considerations set forth in the paper on the *Thinker*? It would seem that this tiny but rather important a point requires some comment.

As it has long been observed in the research literature, some *textual* references (albeit without clear parallels in early iconography)³ to the Egyptian deities’ footgear are attested as early as the Pyramid Texts, where the  <...>  “white sandals” of the Ennead⁴ and the similar ones of the god Horus, in which he “travelled through the land <...> (as) he went to see his father Osiris”⁵, are mentioned.

Still more relevant in our case could be the Pyramid Texts’ reference to sandals of the god Osiris himself, but the context is extremely difficult to understand however, the text speaking about the four “accessories” somehow relating to this god’s footgear:  (Pyr. 443 b). Some scholars believe that the sandals’ fastenings are meant⁶, but, according to another view, four “strongmen” are referred to⁷. Whatever was the real meaning of this obscure Egyptian spell, the very allusion – though merely *textual* – to the sandals of Osiris, with whom the many-eyed person portrayed in the Meroe drawing under discussion was supposedly associated in my paper, is very essential.

As for the *representations* of shod deities, some such examples can also be pointed out. Remarkably, they are mainly attested in the monuments of later period, which is also of relevance because of the late date of the drawing under discussion.

It seems that the images of Horus are where some sort of footgear can more often be seen. Because certain examples display footwear of “militarized” type(s), complementing the armour of Roman type worn by Horus (in his hypostasis of Horus-the-Warrior), it might be assumed that this element of iconography was due to the Graeco-Roman influence. A good demonstration of this is the remarkable

1 I am very grateful to Dr Timothy Kendall (Boston) for stylistic amendments of this text.

2 A.K. Vinogradov, ‘The Many-Eyed *Thinker* from Meroe’, *Der Antike Sudan. MittSAG*, Hft. 26 (2015), SS. 267-75.

3 Note the perplexity of K.-J. Seyfried’s remark in his article ‘Sandale’ in *LÄ V*: “Auch Götter tragen - zumindest nach den Inschriften - S.” (Sp. 380, with Anm. 29, referring to the Pyramid Texts).

4 Pyr. 1197 c-d.

5 Pyr. 1215 a(-b).

6 *The Pyramid Texts*, Tr. by S.A.B. Mercer (New York, London, Toronto, [1952]), p. 100: “<...> four strings, which were in the service of the sandals of Osiris”; R.O. Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts Translated into English* (Oxford, 1998) p. 89: “<...> four cords which belong to the sandals of Osiris”; cf. *Wb.* II, 410, 3: “Sandalenriemen”; R.O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian* (Oxford, 1991), p. 148: *rwd* “cord” (with a reference to this example).

7 G. Maspero, *Les inscriptions des pyramides de Saqqarah* (Paris, 1894), p. 74: “ces quatre vigoureux qui sont sous la sandale d’Osiris”; E.A.W. Budge, *An Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary*, Vol. II (London; 1920), p. 263: “four divine servants of the sandals of Osiris”; cf. *Wb.* II, 413, 12(-26): “Beauftrager, Vertreter o. ä.”, 27: “ein Schutzgott des Osiris”; Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary*, p. 148: *rwdw* “agent”.

figurine in the collection of the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, in Moscow (№ 2985)⁸, depicting the falcon-headed Horus as a Roman(ized) warrior, or rather a commander, with the Egyptian Double Crown on his head, wearing the scale armour (*lorica squamata*) and shod in the laced up high boots (*calcei*)⁹ (Fig. 1)¹⁰.

Of still greater relevance to our case are, naturally, the representations attested on the territory of Ancient Sudan and particularly those found at Meroe. A most interesting example is the relief on the pylon of the pyramid Beg. N. 10¹¹ which shows striding Horus accompanied by a jackal. The falcon-headed god with the Double Crown on his head is wearing armour, shod in sandals, and holds the symbol of life in his right hand and the libation vessel in left (Fig. 2)¹². A very close in iconography but badly damaged scene on a limestone block supposedly from the chapel of the pyramid Beg. N. 35¹³ shows a similar figure, of whom only the rear (left) leg, wearing a sandal, remains (Fig. 3)¹⁴. The presence of a miniature elephant indicates that almost certainly some deity was represented in this scene, and the resemblance in composition suggests that it was Horus as in the Beg. N. 10 relief.

Apart from the falcon-headed Horus, some other deities might also be shown with some footwear. For example, in the Lion Temple at Musawwarat es Sufra we see the anthropomorphical god of hunt Arensnuphis¹⁵ (Fig. 4)¹⁶, an unidentifiable lion-headed

deity¹⁷ along with the war-god Apedemak¹⁸ holding a long bow, and Amun¹⁹, all in “militari(zing)” costumes and shod in sandals.

The deities of a non-military nature are more rarely portrayed wearing some sort of footwear²⁰. An interesting composition, of Ptolemaic period, in the Temple of Opet at Karnak might be pointed out, apparently showing the scene of revitalization of the body of Osiris, surrounded by various gods in attendance²¹. Among those present are four couples of gods of the Hermopolitan Ogdoad, the relevant for us feature of whose portraits are the peculiar shoes (somewhat resembling slippers), all of the same shape, looking like the jackal’s head with erected ears (Fig. 5)²².

Curiously enough, the footwear of the Hermopolitan gods might seem to have something in common with that of the many-eyed *Thinker* in the aforementioned drawing from Meroe. The upright details of his sandals might be taken for erect ears, and the eyes on the upper part of his feet make them look like heads of some creatures (Fig. 6).

Of course, it should be remembered that the drawing in question is of a rather moderate size and hardly may be called a very skillful artistic work, so the identification of the footwear with certainty is a most difficult task. For the general rendering of this curious picture however it would probably be sufficient to conclude that the available data, both iconographic and textual, does not seem to seriously contradict the considerations set forth in the article under discussion, suggesting that the portrayal of the many-eyed *Thinker* displays some features associable with the god Dionysus/Bacchus/Osiris, even though the person depicted is not bare-footed.

8 V.V. Pavlov, S.I. Hodjash, *Egipetskaja plastika malykh form* (Moscow, 1985), pp. 70; 97, notes 41-44 (bibliography); 113 (English summary); ill. 124.

9 A. Mau, ‘Calceus’, *RE* III, 1 (1909), Sp. 1340-45.

10 My special thanks go to the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow, for furnishing the photograph and permission to reproduce it.

11 *LD* V, 28 b; S.E. Chapman, D. Dunham, *Decorated Chapels of the Meroitic Pyramids at Meroë and Barkal* (RCK III; Boston, 1952), pl. 30, I.

12 After *LD* V, 28 b.

13 D. Dunham, *Royal Tombs at Meroe and Barkal* (RCK IV; Boston, 1957), p. 190.

14 After *LD* V, 50 c.

15 St. Wenig, ‘Die Darstellungen. Untersuchung zu Ikonographie, Inhalt und Komposition der Reliefs’, in: F. Hintze, K.-H. Priese, St. Wenig, C. Onasch, G. Buschendorf-Otto, U. Hintze, *Der Löwentempel. Textband (Musawwarat es Sufra, Bd. I, 1; Berlin, 1993)*, SS. 167-68 (§§ 1.6, 1.6.3); F. Hintze, unter Mitwirkung von U. Hintze, K.-H. Priese, K. Stark, *Der Löwentempel. Tafelband (Musawwarat es Sufra, Bd. I, 2; Berlin, 1971)*, Taf. 16(-17) a [Südwand], 29, cf. 28 b (photo); St. Wenig, ‘Arensnuphis and Sebiemeker’, *Meroitic Newsletter* 13 (1973), p. 72.

16 After Wenig, ‘Die Darstellungen’, S. 167, Abb. 118.

17 Wenig, ‘Die Darstellungen’, SS. 167-68 (§§ 1.6 (3)); Hintze et al., *Der Löwentempel. Tafelband*, Taf. 69; cf. 50-(51) b [Nordwand, Sz. 4], 68 a-b (photo).

18 Wenig, ‘Die Darstellungen’, SS. 167-68 (§ 1.6 (3)); Hintze et al., *Der Löwentempel. Tafelband*, Taf. 89 [4/2/2]; cf. 88 c; 90 b; 91 b.

19 Wenig, ‘Die Darstellungen’, SS. 167-68 (§ 1.6 (3)); Hintze et al., *Der Löwentempel. Tafelband*, Taf. 89 [4/2/4]; cf. 88 c; 91 d.

20 Cf., Wenig, ‘Die Darstellungen’, S. 168, §§ 1.6 (3) end; 1.6 (4).

21 *LD* IV, 29 b, cf. R. Lepsius, *Über die Götter der Vier Elemente bei den Ägyptern* (Berlin, 1856), Taf. II (the Ogdoad plus Thoth, all shod in footwear of the same type); PM II, 248-49, (28).

22 After *LD* IV, 29 b (right side, upper register).



Fig. 1a: Statuette of Horus as legionnaire; b: Fragment (Photograph courtesy of the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow).

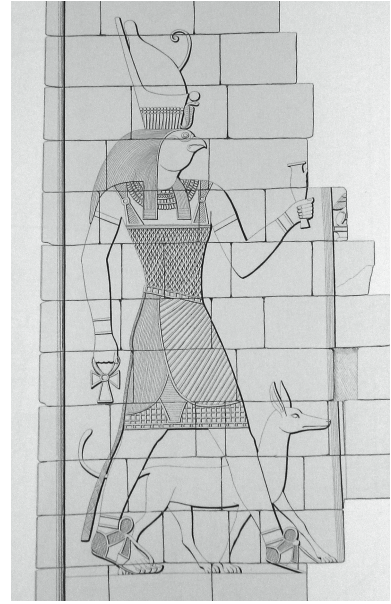


Fig. 2: Relief on the pylon of pyramid Beg. N. 10 (After LD V, 28 b).

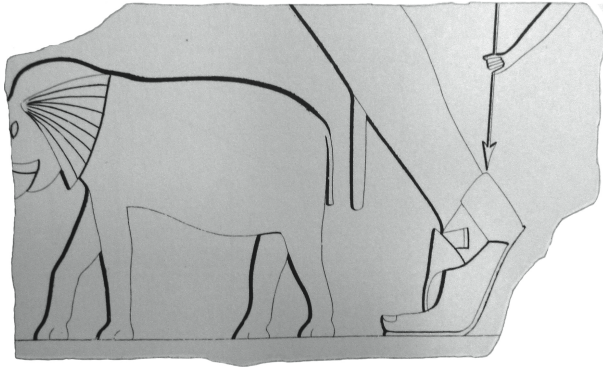


Fig. 3: Block from the chapel of pyramid Beg. N. 35 (After LD V, 50 c).

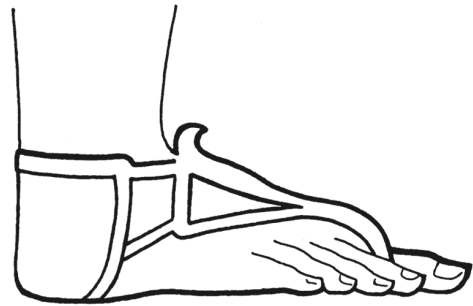


Fig. 4: Sandal of Arensnuphis (After *Musawwarat es Sufra* I.1, Abb. 118).

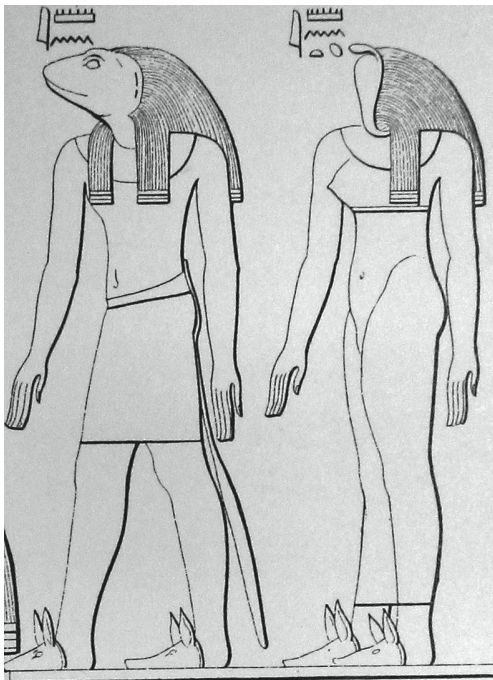


Fig. 5. Scene at Karnak (After LD IV, 29, b).

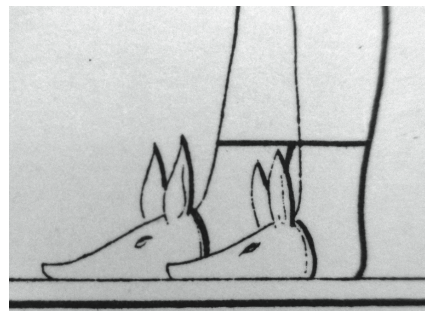
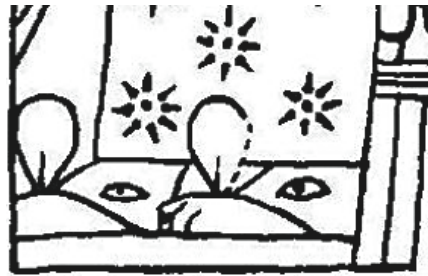


Fig. 6a: Footwear of the *Thinker* (After RCK V, fig. 121 [Fragment]); b: Footwear of goddess Amaunet (After LD IV, 29 b [Fragment]).

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In diesem kurzen *postscriptum* zum Artikel A. Vinogradov, *The Many-Eyed Thinker from Meroe*, *MittSAG* 26 (2015), 267-275, werden einige zusätzliche Anmerkungen zu der Überlegung, die Darstellung des vieläugigen Wesens (gefunden in Beg. W 127 in Meroe) mit dem Gott Dionysus/Bacchus/Osiris zu assoziieren, gemacht. Eine weitere Besonderheit

dieser Darstellung sollte nicht übersehen werden: Die gezeigte Person ist mit Sandalen beschuht – dies mag Zweifel an der vorgeschlagenen Identifizierung hervorrufen, da ägyptische und meroitische Götter in der Regel barfuß dargestellt werden. Jedoch werden einige bildliche und textliche Parallelen angeführt, aufgrund derer der Autor herausstellen kann, dass die Sandalen nicht im Widerspruch zur ursprünglich vorgeschlagenen Identifizierung stehen.

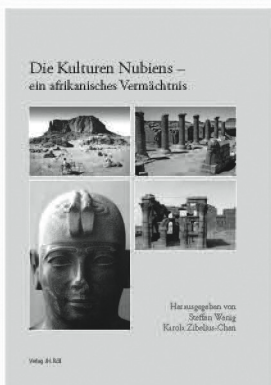
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