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Egyptian Faience Concubine

An ancient Egyptian standing green faience female figure, nude except for a wig, holding a vessel on her head; with two trussed ducks under her arms, and aside her ankles stand two cobras.



Third Intermediate Period, 21st - 22nd Dynasty,
Ca. 1070 - 712 BC.
Height: 3 1/2 in. (9 cm).

Previously identified as "concubines," female figures of this type are now understood as symbols of fertility, which was essential in both this life and the next. They were set up in the home to enhance a wife's fruitfulness and a husband's potency. As tomb offerings, they perpetuated the deceased's sexual power in the afterlife.

cf.: a similar example in the Petrie Museum: UC28687, J. Bulte, Talismans Egyptiens d'heureuse maternite, Paris, 1991, pls. 19-22.

Published: J. Eisenberg, Art of the Ancient World, vol. XXIII (2012), no. 207.

Formerly in a New York private collection; previously in a French private collection.

inventory number: 7828

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