



Votive Lion Vessel For 'Damiq-Ilishu'

2nd Millennium B.C.

8.2 x 12 cm (3 1/4 x 4 3/4 inches)

Stone

This Mesopotamian black stone vessel is in the form of a reclining lion. The animal has a raised oval recess in the centre of its back, its tail curls round to the right, and up to the centre of the body, its back paw is carved in relief below. The back is inscribed in cuneiform with a dedication to God Nergal for the life of Damiq-Ilishu King of Sumer and Akkad. The 12 line Sumerian inscription was read by C.B.F. Walker of the British Museum. "To Nergal of Apiak, important lord, lion possessing strength, his god, for the life of Damiq-ilišu, king of Sumer and Akkad, Warad-Nanna, scribe of the king, son of Piquum, his servant, dedicated it (this figurine) to him". Damiq-ilishu (c.1740-1717 B.C.) was the 15th and final king of the Dynasty of Isin. He succeeded his father Sîn-magir and reigned for 23 years. There are four royal inscriptions relating to this king one of which is also a palace inscription and a copy of a dedication to Nergal of Apiak which is on this votive lion sculpture. His standard inscription characterizes him as the "farmer who piles up the produce (of the land) in granaries", but a palace inscription has the same dedication to Nergal of Apiak as that on this lion. 1. dne3-eri11-gal 2. a-pi5-akki 3. nir alim / pirig ne3 4. dingir-ra-a-ni-ir 5. nam-ti 6. dda-mi-iq-i3-li2-šu 7. lugal ki-en-gi ki-uri 8. ARAD-dnanna 9. dub-sar lugal 10. dumu pi2-iq-qum-/ke4 11. ARAD-da-ni 12. a mu-na-ru A related figure of a dog is in the Musée du Louvre, Paris (see Parrot, p290, AO4349). It is dedicated by a physician from Lagash to the goddess Ninisina, 'for the life of Sumu-El', king of Larsa.

Literature:

Antiquities, Islamic Art, Tribal Art, Indian, Nepalese, Tibetan and South-East Asian Art, Sotheby's, 12th & 13th July 1976, Lot 357.

"Old Babylonian Period (2003-1595 BC), Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Early Periods vol. 4." Douglas R. Frayne, 1990, pp. 105-106 (this piece is catalogued as Damiq-ilisu 4.01.15.2001).

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