

Aegyptus et Pannonia IX.



Acta Symposii anno 2023

BUDAPEST

Aegyptus et Pannonia IX.

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On the cover: Vase from the Zsolnay factory, © private
collection (see FULLÉR – FERÓ, fig. 14.)

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Aegyptus et Pannonia IX.

Objects and Concepts.

Proceedings of the Conference

19th-20th January, 2023, Budapest, Hungary

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THE 'OBJECTS AND CONCEPTS' CONFERENCE AND THE HEFS AEC

DR. HEDVIG GYÓRY, PHD

HEFS AEC president

The Ancient Egyptian Committee of the Hungarian-Egyptian Friendship Society (HEFS AEC / MEBT ÓEB) organised the 'Objects and Concepts' conference in collaboration with the Semmelweis Medical History Museum of the Hungarian National Museum on 19th-20th January 2023. Scholars joined the event in person in Budapest and online from around the world.

The conference aimed to provide a platform for presenting ongoing Egyptological and medical historical research projects related to artefacts, as well as results. It also offered the professional community and a broader interested audience the opportunity to become acquainted with new discoveries, as well as theoretical and methodological approaches. A key objective was to initiate dialogue among specialists in Egyptology, archaeology, ancient history, ethnography, cultural anthropology, Oriental studies and African studies. This would broaden professional perspectives, expand and share knowledge, and shape research approaches. This objective was largely achieved during the conference.

From an Egyptological standpoint, 2022 marked a dual jubilee: the 200th anniversary of Jean-François Champollion's decipherment of hieroglyphic writing, and the commemoration of the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb 100 years earlier. Drawing inspiration from these events, the conference aimed to reconsider what Tutankhamun's artefacts have taught us about ancient Egyptian culture and how the decipherment of hieroglyphs has deepened our understanding of ancient perceptions of artefacts, their meanings and their uses. The presentations focused on research projects exploring the understanding and interpretation of material culture in ancient and modern societies. This was achieved by reconsidering the real or perceived meanings of objects, or by examining their function, use, and social value.

Following the period of disruption caused by the COVID pandemic, this *Aegyptus et Pannonia* conference was announced as an in-person event in the hope that academic life would return to normal. In practice, however, online

participation has become a permanent feature of scholarly communication. There was still strong demand for remote presentations, with several participants requesting the option to attend online. To a limited extent, this was accommodated, and the conference was organised in a hybrid format. In keeping with tradition, the programme included both English- and Hungarian-language sections. Nevertheless, all contributors were asked to submit written versions of their papers in English for the conference volume. The speakers included nearly equal numbers of Hungarian and international scholars. Most of the studies published in the conference volume are revised versions of the presentations and reflect the discussions held during and after the event. A few papers were omitted due to the authors' other commitments. These were replaced by a study of Bes amulets, as a continuation done on the ornamental Bes amulets during the 18th Dynasty. Abstracts submitted to the 'Objects and Concepts' conference are available in a separate booklet and on the 'Fáraók Földjén' (In the Land of the Pharaohs / ibisz.iif.hu/ozirisz) website of the HEFS AEC, in both Hungarian and English.

Thursday, 19 January 2023

10:00–10:30

Arrival and Greeting

HEFS / MEBS + HNM CCP Semmelweis Medical History Museum (SOM)

10:30–12:00 / EN

Virginia Webb: Reception and alteration: Aegyptiaca in 8th- and 7th-century East Greece through the lens of sanctuary deposits on Samos and Miletus. Import or local production?

Benedek Varga: Connections in the museum representation of the Seuso Treasure

Urška Furlan: A case study of society through the production, consumption, and circulation of amulets of the Nile Delta in the first millennium BCE

12:30–14:00 / HU

Dóra Bohacsek: „Idézlek téged, démon, bárki vagy is (...)” – Latin nyelvű átoktáblák Észak-Afrikából [“I summon you, demon, whoever you are (...)” – Latin curse tablets from North Africa]

Krisztina Scheffer – Hedvig Győry: Udzsat szem amulettek a SOMban [Wedjat eye amulets in the collection of the HNM Semmelweis Museum for Medical history]

Gabriella Vámos: „Fújtak rá cukrot, hogy ne fájjon annyira...” A cukor mint a népi gyógyászat egyik alapanyaga [“They sprayed sugar on it so it wouldn't hurt so much...” Sugar as one of the ingredients of folk medicine]

Friday, 20 January 2023

10:00–11:30 / EN

Rita Simon: The curious history of Tutankhamun's scarab

Afaf Wahba: Objects associated with burials: concept, purpose, and meaning, with examples from recent excavations in Egypt

Esther Pons Mellado: A Predynastic vessel with human and animal representations

12:00–13:00 / HU

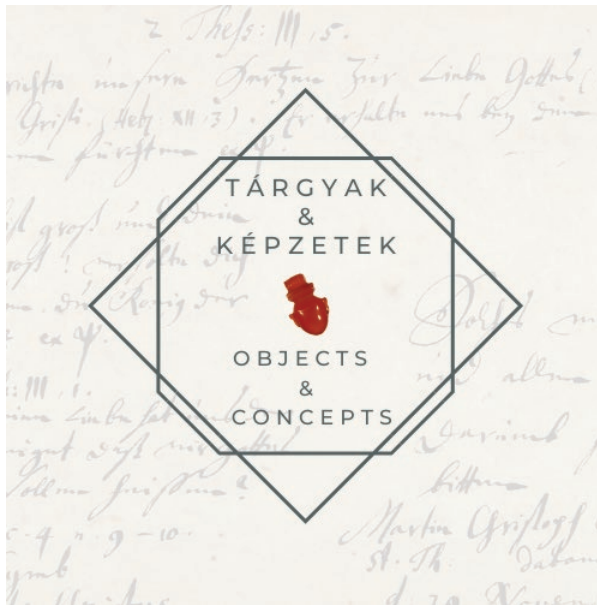
Andrea Fullér – Eszter Ferő: Tutanhamentől a szecesszióig: a Zsolnay gyár egyiptizáló díszműáruja [From Tutankhamun to Art Nouveau: the Zsolnay factory's Egyptionizing decorative goods]

Péter Véninger: Medma és Hipponion, két ókori görög város kerámia emlékei fazekas szemmel [Clay objects of two ancient Greek towns, Medma and Hipponion, with a potter's eye]

Hedvig Győry: Az év ókori egyiptomi emléke: A Thoerisz/Taweret amulettek kérdéséhez [The ancient Egyptian object of the year: To the question of the Thoeris/Taweret amulets]

13:00–13:30

Closing remarks



The title and design of the conference were linked to the double anniversary in 2022. In Hungary, as elsewhere, considerable attention was devoted to Jean-François Champollion, who used the Rosetta Stone to decipher the hieroglyphs, establish their grammatical system and identify their vocabulary. This paved the way for a new understanding of ancient Egyptian culture. Decades of intensive scholarly work have built on his results, enabling

modern audiences to read hieroglyphic texts and gain an understanding – at least in broad outlines – of the thought processes of ancient Egyptians. Nevertheless, further refinement is necessary in this field. One consequence of this breakthrough was that the interpretation of material culture reached a new level: previously uninterpretable or largely speculative assumptions were replaced by interpretations supported by textual sources or more precise approaches to perceived meanings.

The conference logo features a heart-shaped amulet inside a geometric frame, set against a 19th-century manuscript. This symbolises the ancient Egyptian belief that the heart was the key to both biological life and emotions and thought.

However, reading ancient Egyptian texts does not mean that all questions have been answered. One such issue concerns the Stela of Djedher¹ in the Museum of Fine Arts. In this stela the adoring official offering to Osiris, Isis, and Nephthys is shown – following New Kingdom models – with a balm cone on his head, yet its design suggests that its original meaning was lost in later periods. It became a cone-shaped element with branching lines emerging from it. This motif also highlights the deteriorated condition of the centuries-old models, later alterations to which were not always distinguished from the original forms by subsequent artists. By contrast, the jackal figure standing on a boat in the upper register of the stela – despite being a rare depiction – clearly symbolises Anubis's role as 'guide of the soul' in the afterlife. This role is explained from multiple perspectives in written Egyptian sources. For this reason, the stela was chosen as the backdrop for the call for papers.

Another significant anniversary in 2022 was the 100th anniversary of Howard Carter and Lord Carnarvon's discovery of the treasures in Tutankhamun's tomb. The objects unearthed at that time had an enormous global impact thanks to their breathtaking beauty, unique forms and exquisite craftsmanship. Public interest in ancient Egypt in Hungary has always been intense,² as evidenced by numerous Egyptian-style monuments, such as the

1 MEKIS, Tamás, *Quelques données nouvelles sur les stèles Budapest MBA inv. no 51.1928 et Prague MN P 1636, et sur la famille de Iâhmès fils de Smendès, propriétaire de la statue Caire JE 37075*, in Coulon, Laurent, *La Cachette de Karnak Nouvelles perspectives sur les découvertes de Georges Legrain*. Bibliothèque d'Étude 16. Cairo: Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities – Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale 2016, 383-395.

2 For today's interest see e.g. FERÓ, Eszter, *The Body of Nefertiti: The Curious Incident of the Little Warsawa the Venice Biennial*, in JÚNOVÁ, Adéla Macková – STORCHOVÁ, Lucie – JÚN, Libor (eds.), *Egypt and Austria X – Visualizing the Orient: Central Europe and the Near East in the 19th and 20th Centuries*. Prague: Academy of Performing Arts in Prague 2016, 107-118.

Jewish cemetery in Budapest,³ the Szivárvány Cinema in Kaposvár,⁴ and the monuments in Csákvár and Hédervár,⁵ or part of them⁶. Likewise, the Zsolnay Factory's Egyptianising artefacts⁷ testify to this enduring popularity. Other Egyptian and Egyptianising artefacts illustrate this phenomenon further, including the wooden stela painted by Blanka Teleki (1806–1862). This was deciphered and published based on her painting by Emil Haeffner (1892–1953).⁸ When the stela – long thought lost – was later rediscovered, it emerged that the painting was an almost perfect copy.⁹ Further artefacts

3 FULLÉR, Andrea, *Egyiptizáló síremlékek a budapesti zsidó temetőben a 19–20. század fordulóján*. Ókor 18/3, 2019, 96-112; FULLÉR, Andrea, *Egyptianizing Funerary Architecture in Budapest*: Mladen Tomorad (ed.): *Egypt and Austria XII – Egypt and the Orient*, in *The Current Research. Proceedings of the Conference held at the Faculty of Croatian Studies, University of Zagreb* (September 17th-22nd, 2018). Oxford-Zagreb 2020, 353-373

4 FULLÉR, Andrea, *A kaposvári Szivárvány Kultúrpalota egyiptizáló dekorációja*. Ókor 4/2014, 67-78; FULLÉR, Andrea, *Egyptianizing Decoration of the Szivárvány Cinema in Kaposvár*. in JÜNOVA Macková, Adéla – STORCHOVÁ, Lucie - JÜN, Libor (eds), *Egypt and Austria X. Visualizing the Orient: Central Europe and the Near East in the 19th and 20th centuries*. Prague: Academy of Performing Arts in Prague 2016, 179-191; FULLÉR, Andrea, *A kaposvári Szivárvány Mozi – A húszas évek egyiptomi stílusú mozzijainak hazai példája*, in BÁCS, Tamás – DEZSŐ, Tamás – VÉR, Ádám (eds.) *Aegyptiaca et Assyriaca. Tanulmányok az Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Ókortudományi Intézetéből*. Antiqua et Orientalia 5. Budapest: ELTE Eötvös Kiadó 2015, 76-92.

5 FERŐ, Eszter, *Csákvári piramis és hédervári szfinx: a magyar egyiptománia nyomában*. 4. Ókor 2014, 55-66; FERŐ, Eszter, *Pyramids in the „Back Garden”: Some Remarks on Egyptomania in Hungary*. Lecture at *The Perception of the Orient in Central Europe (1800–1918)*. Conference *Egypt and Austria IX*, 2013. Betliar, Slovakia, 2013. október 21-23; FERŐ, Eszter, *Az egyiptománia jelensége az újkori Magyarországon, avagy hogyan kerül piramis egy Esterházy kastélyparkba?* in BÁCS, Tamás – DEZSŐ, Tamás – VÉR, Ádám (eds.) *Aegyptiaca et Assyriaca. Tanulmányok az Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Ókortudományi Intézetéből*. Antiqua et Orientalia 5. Budapest: ELTE Eötvös Kiadó 2015, 59-76.

6 GULYÁS, András, *A house with winged sundisks in Peterdy street, Budapest*, in *Festschrift Gábor Schreiber*, in print.

7 See the article in this volume, and FERŐ, Eszter, *In Search of the Orient: The Zsolnay Way*, in CZERNY, Ernst (ed.): *Egypt and Austria XI – In Search of the Orient*. Proceedings of the Symposium held at the Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien (September 20th to 24th, 2016). Egypt and Austria – Kunsthistorisches Museum, Wien - Kraków 2018, 45–57; FERŐ, Eszter, *Zsolnay-titok másképp: egyiptománia a magyar iparművészetben*. *Zsolnay's secret in a new light: Egyptomania in Hungarian applied arts*. *Belvedere* 31/1, 2019, 166-178 – DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14232/belv.2019.1.11>; FERŐ, E. – FULLÉR, A. *Tűzben született lótuszvirágok*. *Egyiptizáló alkotások a Zsolnay gyárban*. Pécs: Janus Pannonius Múzeum 2023; FERŐ, Eszter – FULLÉR, Andrea, *Eosin Cat and Pyrogranite Sphinx – New Remarks on the Egyptianizing Colours of the Zsolnay Factory*, in HUDAKOVA, Lubica – HUDEC, Josef (eds.), *Egypt and Austria XIII – Between the treaties of Sistova and Lausanne: Contacts between the Orient and Central Europe in the 19th and early 20th Centuries*. Proceedings of the Conference held by the Aigyptos Foundation and the Egypt and Austria Society at Topoľčiansky (October 21st-25th, 2020). In press.

8 HAEFFNER, Emil, *Ein verschollene Stele aus der Sammlung F. Kiss in Buda*. *Oriens Antiquus*, Budapest I, 1945, 59-65.

9 See the latest publication of the Stele at MEKIS, Tamás, *Quelques données nouvelles sur les stèles Budapest MBA inv. no 51.1928 et Prague MN P 1636, et sur la famille de Iâhmés fils de Smedès, propriétaire de la statue Caire JE 37075*, in COULON, Laurent, *La Cachette de Karnak*.



in this field have been brought together in a recently published volume by the Museum of Fine Arts¹⁰.

Nouvelles perspectives sur les découvertes de Georges Legrain. Bibliothèque d'Étude 161. Cairo: Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities and Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale 2016, 383-398.

¹⁰ KÓTHAY, Katalin Anna – LIPTAY, Éva, *Az ókori Egyiptom Magyarországon. Pillanatképek a magyarországi Egyiptom-képek, egyiptizálás és aegyptiacagyűjtés történetéből a 18. század kezdetétől 1939-ig, az első egyiptomi kiállítás megnyitásáig.* Budapest: Szépművészeti Múzeum 2025, with contributions from András Gulyás, Flóra Kevély, Katalin Kóthay, Éva Liptay and Tamás Mekis.

Motivated by the growing interest in Egyptology, our committee launched the annual 'Ancient Egyptian Object of the Year' initiative. The first object was the lotus flower in 2019; the bee from royal titulary was selected in 2020; Amenhotep, son of Hapu, in 2021; the Thoeris/Taweret amulet, which initiated the Taweret research project, in 2022; a representation of the goddess Seshat in 2023; the figure of the goddess Maat in 2024; and the Middle Kingdom soul house in 2025. These naturally formed part of the research and outreach programme for those years. Alongside this, we continued to deliver our customary public lectures at our headquarters and in schools. Our members pursued their own research, and we continued to hold our scholarly international conferences and annual student drawing competition. Selected submissions from the latter are usually displayed in an exhibition. Just a few days ago, we opened a children's drawing exhibition at the Child Museum in Cairo for the first time in our Society's history. This is the Egyptian presentation of our 2024 exhibition, 'The Holy Family in Egypt', organised jointly with the Deák 17 Gallery. This time, it was organised in Egypt with the support of the Hungarian Liszt Institute in Cairo. In addition to raising awareness, we conducted research largely related to anniversaries that year.

The Tutankhamun jubilee in 2022 was commemorated internationally and aroused widespread interest in Hungary. To mark the occasion, the Hungarian Post issued a commemorative stamp block and matching envelope¹¹ depicting the famous gold mask and nested coffins. In the background is a gold relief scene from a small shrine (JE 61481¹²) from the tomb depicting Tutankhamun and his wife, Ankhesenamun. Among the finds from this naos was a pendant depicting the standing king being suckled by Weret-hekau, the snake-bodied goddess ("*Great of Magic*"; JE 61952)¹³, suspended from a necklace. As the shrine had been found looted, it is not known whose statue it originally adorned. The Hungarian Minting Company also issued a gold-plated silver coin¹⁴ featuring Tutankhamun's mask on the front and a 3D image of his tomb on the reverse. A documentary presenting the latest research was shown in cinemas – the Italian movie 'The Temples of Art: Tutankhamun – The Latest Exhibition', which was shown from May onwards. All of these events were preceded by the international travelling exhibition 'Tutankhamun: The Pharaoh's Burial Chamber', which ran from 2019 to 2020, but unfortunately closed prematurely due to the COVID pandemic. Although it presented only high-quality replicas, it nevertheless made artefacts that were previously only known through images tangible for many

11 The blocks were printed by Pénzjegynyomda Zrt. based on the designs of the graphic artist György Kara.

12 <http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/gri/carter/108.html>

13 <http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/gri/carter/108c.html>

14 <https://www.erekmibocsato.hu/webaruhaz/tutanhamon-maszki-100-efordulo>

Hungarian visitors. Since November, the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM) has presented the assemblage in all its glory.

In addition to our educational outreach work, we continued to conduct research. The jubilee gave us the chance to focus more intensively on our Nephthys Project, which centres on Egyptian mummies. Within this framework, we organised several scholarly events, including a workshop on current issues in mummy research at the Hungarian Natural History Museum, as well as a special programme at the Semmelweis Museum dedicated to Tutankhamun's mummy. The amulets¹⁵ placed on his body in multiple layers played an important role in this programme. According to the Murray-Nuttall Handlist, there were 78 pieces in total. Interestingly, only three of these depict anthropomorphic deities, none of which are in the customary striding pose. Instead, they are all seated with their knees drawn up (Anubis, Thoth and Horus), and all have plain, undecorated backs. Among the animal amulets, in addition to various snake forms, only the vulture is depicted. There are two plant amulets (leaf and double leaf) and the majority are object amulets. Several are specifically royal protective objects, such as the was sceptres, while others are rare or otherwise unknown forms: Y- and T- shapes, knots, a khepesh, a mallet, a knife, a miniature bracelet, and a rhomboid form. Well-known examples include the wadj and the ankh. There is also a striking number of djed pillars and Isis knots, with seven of each. Two amulets stand out due to their material: an iron wedjat eye and an iron headrest amulet. The latter only became common in the Saite period. Carter recorded ten further items, which he simply called "amulets". One of these is a heart bearing a crest relief, and there are several beads inscribed with Tutankhamun's name, as well as a shell. The assemblage is supplemented by two earrings.

The objects around us reflect the era in which we live and our identity, whether our lives are structured according to religious or secular principles. In ancient Egypt, these two aspects were inextricably linked, as is perfectly illustrated by amulets. They were chosen to provide protection and enhance outward appearance. Beyond religious and secular considerations, their protective and aesthetic functions were expanded by elements that shaped identity. From this perspective, fashion and social expectations also played a significant role, sometimes even overriding individual characteristics — particularly in the case of a pharaoh. It is therefore especially interesting to examine the amulets placed on Tutankhamun's body to protect him in the afterlife. Even a young pharaoh was provided with everything necessary, since he was already regarded as a god in life — a status that became even more pronounced after death.

15 <http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/perl/gi-ca-qmakeres.pl?sid=41.33.51.9-1766043880&qno=1&sta=0&qtx=amulet>

The exceptionally high quality of the amulets reflects his rank, and the selection clearly reflects the period in which he lived: the transition from the Amarna reform to the Ramesside era, which emphasised individual religiosity.

As a result of the presentation of Tutankhamun's mummy, the HEFS AEC and the Semmelweis Museum have jointly initiated a project aimed at analysing the SOM amulets from historical, medical and religious perspectives. While the SOM amulets cannot rival Tutankhamun's exceptional *wedjat* eye, magnificent divine figures, or elegant papyrus columns, the everyday beauty of the SOM heart amulet likewise merits attention. Although the museum's *wedjat* eye amulets played a central role in the conference presentation, the heart, scarab, *djed* pillar and other amulets received limited attention. Nevertheless, this joint article focuses on the *djed* pillar. From a historical perspective relating to the museum's collections, it occupies a special place alongside the scarab with which it was acquired. As the scarab (*hpr* beetle) from one of Tutankhamun's pectorals is emphasised elsewhere in the volume, we have chosen to focus on the *djed* pillar instead. This symbol also played an important role in Tutankhamun's tomb. In addition to the seven *djed* amulets placed on his body, one¹⁶ was deposited in a niche on the southern side of the burial chamber in the western corner and subsequently walled up. Another pillar¹⁷ was found almost at the centre of the southern side of the fourth, innermost naos, directly in front of the sarcophagus. The solar-lunar form of the *djed* pillar also appears on one of the pharaoh's pectorals¹⁸.

The first article in the volume summarises the research of Andrea Fullér and Eszter Feró on Zsolnay ceramics, with a particular focus on the Tutankhamun series. Through their meticulous research, the authors were able to ascertain the location of numerous pieces, establish the identities of the artists, trace the origins of the motifs, and determine the sources of the images used. They also demonstrated that works produced prior to the discovery of the tomb were in fact included in the Tutankhamun series.

The author's study categorises 18th Dynasty naturalistic Bes amulets according to their iconography. Using excavation finds and museum collections

16 That is beside the head. Carter no. 260, H: JE 61379. <http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/perl/gi-ca-qmakesumm.pl?sid=82.131.230.142-1766356119&qno=1&curr=260>

17 Carter no. 250, JE 61785, max. H: 56 cm – <http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/perl/gi-ca-qmakesumm.pl?sid=82.131.230.142-1766356119&qno=1&curr=250>

18 Carter no. 261i – M: 12x 16,3 cm. The pectoral is representing the *djed* pillar topped by moon sickle and sun disc between Isis and Nephthys. Another pectoral in the same set has in the middle an Osiris figure, while at the third pectoral the central figure is missing. See <http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/perl/gi-ca-qmakesumm.pl?sid=82.131.230.142-1766356119&qno=1&curr=261i>.

as a basis, the study attempts to map the relationships between the resulting groups, as well as their chronological and spatial distribution. The study also highlights new conceptual phenomena present on amulets predating the Amarna period.

The third article, which was also written by the author, focuses on Old Kingdom Taweret amulets. It is primarily based on publications documenting excavations conducted by Guy Brunton in the Qau-Matmar region of Middle Egypt. As well as analysing iconographic groupings, the article examines the usage of Taweret amulets across individual cemeteries, assesses usage patterns and attempts to reconstruct contemporary perceptions of the goddess based on assemblages.

Esther Pons Mellado presents a Naqada II vessel from the Museo Arqueológico Nacional in Madrid, the provenance of which is unknown. The vessel is lavishly embellished with depictions of antelopes, goats, and gazelles, whose parallel depictions are listed on a variety of other vessels. Together, these vessels vividly illustrate how the ‘green desert’ surrounding the Nile — the Sahara of today — was able to sustain such rich wildlife during the Predynastic period.

In their joint study, the author and Krisztina Scheffer trace the acquisition of the djed pillar amulet in the Semmelweis Museum’s collection, explore the possible motivations behind its purchase, and introduce the collector who once owned it. The study also provides an overview of djed pillar representations and variations of the amulet form across periods, alongside an examination of their associated Pharaonic concepts. It also takes a brief look at some modern reinterpretations of the form.

Rita Simon examines one of Tutankhamun’s pectorals, the central feature of which is a scarab crafted from Libyan Desert Glass. She discusses the discovery of this material and considers possible pathways by which it arrived in Egypt, taking into account the contemporary role of the Western Desert. She also provides a theological interpretation of the composition as a whole. Her new interpretation emphasises Tutankhamun’s solar-lunar character.

Gabriella Vámos examines the medicinal use of sugar in eye treatments in Hungary using historical and ethnographic sources, which can be traced back to domestic sources from the 16th century onwards. Her research shows that, initially, cane sugar was used primarily among aristocratic circles to treat cataracts and trachoma. From the late 18th century onwards, sugar made from sugar beets appeared in peasant eye treatments; the most recent ethnographic source of which dates to 1974.

In his contribution, Péter Véninger discusses a technical phenomenon identified during a joint Hungarian–Italian project on terracottas from the southern Italian cities of Medma and Hipponion. Votive figurines in the

sanctuaries of these cities, founded by the Calabrian Lokroi, were typically produced not by trained craftsmen, but by the dedicators themselves. This meant that, in addition to offering tangible objects, they also offered their own labour to the goddess venerated at the sanctuary.

Afaf Wahba presents an Old Kingdom burial assemblage from Saqqara, notable for its reed coffin. Although the owner was not one of the wealthiest individuals, he can still be considered relatively prosperous. His body was wrapped in domestic linen, and he was given a headrest to accompany him into the afterlife. Anthropological analysis suggests that he was a middle-aged man whose skeletal remains show signs of diseases and alterations that may indicate his occupation.

Virginia Webb compares Egyptian and Egyptianising faience objects from the Heraion on Samos and the Sanctuary of Aphrodite at Miletus (Zeytintepe). She discusses these objects in several groups, including scarabs, amulets, falcon and cat figurines, non-suspendable bird, animal and human figurines, and miniature baskets. Her analysis reveals that visitors to the sanctuaries of the two goddesses offered Egyptianising objects that were made outside Egypt and differed from each other in many respects at the two sites.

As this brief overview demonstrates, the studies in this volume examine various aspects of Egypt's material culture, including archaeology, art, craftsmanship, everyday life, religion, and the country's influence on the wider world. A study also presents an example of ethnographic methodology, tracing the origins of the Hungarian use of sugar for medicinal purposes and illustrating how economic changes can lead to significant transformations in the use and interpretation of materials over time. This diversity of examples has enabled us to fulfil our primary objective of examining the historical changes and transformations in the meanings, interpretations and functions of objects.

Unfortunately, the publication of the volume was delayed due to technical and organisational issues, including a damaged hard drive. This resulted in the publication appearing later than planned. Nevertheless, the thorough and professional research conducted by the authors, the support received, and the efforts of the other contributors made the publication possible.

Firstly, we would like to thank the speakers who delivered inspiring lectures and shared insights into their research. We would also like to thank the HNM PCC Semmelweis Museum and its Director General, Benedek Varga; the House of Nations and its President, György Kilián; as the venue providers, and all the collaborators for their hard work on the technical and organisational tasks during the conference.

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TOWARDS THE CLASSICAL BES AMULETS. 18TH DYNASTY NATURALISTIC-STYLE PLAQUE AMULETS OF BES

DR. HEDVIG GYŐRY PHD

HEFS Ancient Egyptian Committee, Vámbéry Ármin
Oriental Academy, Budapest HU

ABSTRACT

During the New Kingdom, depictions of dwarves appeared frequently among plaque amulets. By the middle of the 18th Dynasty, the figures of Pataikos and Bes had clearly been distinguished from each another, and naturalistic designs had replaced the ornamental forms also in the depictions of the god Bes (see my previous article on these earlier Bes amulets in the volume “Under the Spell of Bes”). These amulets were particularly numerous and varied during the reigns of Amenhotep III and Akhenaten, especially in Malkata and Amarna. Two approaches can essentially be observed among the Bes amulets of the time: the frontal stance characteristic of earlier reliefs representing various Bes-like protective deities and the profile stance, which was introduced as an innovation in his depictions, though it was characteristic of the anthropomorph figures in general. In the latter case, the dynamic nature of the dance justified the change, which was often associated with playing an instrument, typically a tambourine. This article presents the typological variety of these amulet shapes, organises them, and discusses their occurrence, origin, and method of use.

KEYWORDS: Bes, Pataikos, typology, religion, protection, dance, plaque, amulet

INTRODUCTION

A common figure in Egyptian art is a deity depicted as a dwarf with leonine features who wears a feather crown. Although he may have had several Egyptian names, these depictions are known as Bes, as this is the name given to him by classical authors. His depiction on amulet first emerged during the 18th Dynasty. As with several other types of amulet, the figure first appeared on plaque amulets. To make sense of the many different representations of Bes, I created a typological system. The first part of this study was published in the

volume “Under the Spell of Bes” in an article about ornamental Bes amulets during the 18th Dynasty. My original intention was to present a typology of Bes plaque amulets for the entire 18th Dynasty, but due to other commitments, I focused there on the emergence of these amulets in the first half of the Dynasty instead, on the ornamental Bes plaque-amulets.¹ You can find the follow-up to that study here.

As before, I considered morphological, iconographic and chronological aspects, primarily focusing on the 18th Dynasty, though not exclusively. Starting with archaeologically identifiable plaque amulets, I broadened my knowledge by studying similar amulets and their moulds in relevant collections. Consequently, this work is based partly on collection materials besides excavation data. However, due to the lack of physical examination of the actual objects, technical details were neglected. As I could only view a significant proportion of the amulets in photographs and drawings, I consider the presented typology to be preliminary despite reviewing a substantial amount of material. Nevertheless, there is sufficient material to gain an approximate understanding of the variations in Bes plaque amulets that mostly emerged during the second half of the 18th Dynasty, and I anticipate only minor modifications as further material becomes accessible.

CLASSIFICATION

The classification is arranged according to the broad chronological periods during which the objects were first discovered, since a significant proportion of them have been lost forever and their discovery is contingent. The duration of use could have differed greatly: pieces inherited from predecessors may have been used alongside those corresponding to the new fashion, or at least kept together. A concrete example of this can be found in Malkata. However, the production of pieces corresponding to older tastes eventually ceased, and these pieces gradually fell out of use and disappeared from the archaeological record. Another possibility is the reuse of older specimens. This could easily have happened, given the numerous examples of people being buried in earlier, reused graves. In such cases, amulets would certainly have surfaced and could have been worn again. They also could have been produced using a mould or served as inspiration for creating a new form. However, I did not identify an example of this in the material.

A significant change in the appearance of Bes amulets can be observed in the second half of the 18th Dynasty, evident in both style and iconography. These amulets fall into two main categories: one that continues the traditional frontal depiction of Bes and another that shows him in profile. Both stances retain the relief character and can be divided into several groups, although

¹ Gyóry 2024.

there are also overlaps where they borrow solutions from each other. However, a detailed study of the technical, typological and workshop-practice-related details of these amulets would exceed the scope of this paper, particularly given that the foundry is unknown in many cases – a situation that is particularly common for museum and art trade pieces. In such cases, it is practically impossible to determine the specific use of individual Bes amulets, although, in a few instances, inferences can be drawn based on their appearance.

Amulets that are clearly identifiable as Bes first appear at the beginning of the 18th Dynasty. Initially, they were small plaques that could be treated as beads. In the earliest pieces, the later Pataikos and Bes iconographic classes cannot yet be clearly distinguished. Over time, however, these stylised plaques were replaced by increasingly identifiable forms: Bow-Legged, Limbs Akimbo and Domino, as I described them in my above mentioned study.

Around the middle of the 18th Dynasty, new types of plaque amulet emerged, joining the existing ones. These new types began to depict naturalistic appearances, which are the central focus of this article. They depict the god in a relatively realistic way, with normal or dwarfish proportions. Most of them are bearded or having a lion mane and stand with their legs apart, often on a base like a true statuette, but they still retain their relief character. Animalistic traits of the face became more and more prominent.

The absence of a neck creates the impression that the image is of a person wearing a mask. The practice of applying head ornaments had not yet developed on the plaque amulets. However, a novel feature, otherwise typical of human figures, is the addition of a composite profile view to the earlier frontal view. These amulets are mostly made of faience and, relatively rarely, glass, with stones applied only occasionally.

Their appearance reflects a new religious and aesthetic approach, and may also indicate a change in their use. For instance, the larger size permitted greater detail, but meant that fewer amulets could be strung on the same string. However, effectiveness certainly remained a fundamental aspect. Also the users of these objects may have changed, as may the manner in which the effect was expected to manifest. Changes may also have occurred in the relationship between geographical, temporal or social groups.

I. FRONTAL STANDING BES AMULETS

A large group of Bes amulets depict the god facing frontally in the nude.² He has a broad face, a small nose, rounded ears on the upper part of his head and a round beard around his mouth. His knees are bent to varying degrees, sometimes forming even a straddle position, his hands are on his pouch or on the thighs, and his tail is tucked between his legs. The feet are typically splayed. The inner

² PETRIE 1894, pl. XVII, 287-8, 290-1; CoA II, p. 116. .

patterns are usually blurred or rough, but sometimes detailed elaborated.

Many pieces are produced in high relief, creating the impression of a real statuette, although they still have plain backs. The facial features can be easily or difficultly discerned, and the body is usually elliptical with a potbelly, but it can also look like a cylinder. Almost all of them are slightly different and can range in size from around 1 cm to 7 cm. Collections often contain large numbers of them without any provenance.

Their appearance can be divided into several groups and are often used alongside other shaped Bes amulets. A good example of this is a necklace in the Petrie Museum (LDUCE-UC46998³): a string of faience beads and amulets. This includes six standing, frontal figures of Bes and twenty-four standing, right-facing figures of Bes holding or playing a tambourine. All of these Bes figures are moulded on one side and flat on the other. They are glazed in various shades of blue, turquoise and green, and have beads attached for suspension.

A. SIMPLE BASIC FIGURE WITHOUT MANE

Several frontal Bes figures without the round lion mane can be found in collections without provenance, but fortunately, there are also examples with



known sources.⁴ We know quite a lot about the Bes amulets in Gurob. In the Petrie collection, for example, there is a string (LDUCE-UC51557⁵) with frontal human figures that are strung with the help of a bead that has been fused onto their heads (Figure 1a). They may be Bes figures because of their stance, but

Figure 1a. Miniature Bes from Gurob © Petrie Museum LDUCE-UC51557.
1b. Ashmolean Museum, © Noriko Stardust, 2009 (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/25396001@N04/4249288574/in/photostream/>)

3 but only ten(?) have their original suspension beads (all ring beads in shades of blue), the rest have had suspension beads pasted on to them in modern times (three blue/turquoise ring beads; five short, green-turquoise cylinder beads; one 3-part segmented red bead; seven 2-part segmented blue beads; four 2-part segmented white beads. They are strung among 61 additional beads: a mixture of ring and short cylinder beads, and three tiny segmented beads. one is yellow, three are red, the rest are blue, turquoise and green.

4 E.g. in the Ashmolean Museum, see MOOREY 2000, pl. III, 2nd row, middle: yellow faience, M: 1,3 x 0,8 cm, inv. no. 1925.415, from Amarna, inlay, possibly a ring bezel plaque.

5 Petrie Museum, inv. no. LDUCE-UC51557, size not given, from Gurob, PETRIE 1890, 40.

they do not appear to have beards or headdresses; therefore, they could also represent Pataikos. However, as the faces are rounded in three cases and the statures are stout, in contrast to another amulet in the same assemblage with an elongated body and oval head, these pieces were probably intended to depict Bes, while the elongated one depicts a Pataikos. This assemblage was placed inside the south wall of the town enclosure at Gurob when it was no longer in use. Four bodies were buried there. As Petrie described, “*One had a necklace of blue and brown and green glass tube beads, short brown glazed pottery beads, blue and glazed pottery Bes figures, and blue glazed pendant of Bast and monkey; the style of these pendants shows that they cannot be far removed from Khuenaten’s period, but being coarser than his, the age of Ramessu II may be well assigned to them; earlier the town would not be deserted there, later the amulets would not be used.*”⁶ The exact shape is not completely clear, but they are indeed near to the classical figure, but without mane. As the town wall cannot be dated archaeologically and the town’s decline started during Amenhotep III’s reign, this necklace dates to around the end of the 18th or early 19th Dynasty. Thus, Ramesses II’s reign, as suggested by Petrie, is a possible date, although not certain.

A necklace containing three Bes plaques and six Taweret amulets, all of which were manufactured in the same way, was also found in Gurob. These are now kept in the Manchester Museum (683c⁷). This assemblage originates from Petrie’s 1888 excavations and is therefore likely to be from the town site. Unfortunately, as no further information is available, the context is unknown. The Bes figures are more or less the same shape, and the glaze appears to be similar in character.

Another similar shape was found in Buhen, in tomb K3,⁸ probably dating to the time of Thutmose III; it was suspended via a horizontal hole in the head. Also the piece from Zawiet el-Meytin (Louvre E23593⁹) seems to belong

6 PETRIE 1890, 40.

7 Manchester Museum, inv. n. 863c, string with amulets and ring beads: three frontal Bes, H: 1,5 cm (thanks Campbell Price for the data), six Taweret in profile. <https://museumcollections.manchester.ac.uk/collections/item/5006c542-32f0-3b9e-96d3-5c3132c7304c/?s%3DBes%2Bamulet%26page%3D2&pos=35> . .

8 E.g. RANDALL-MACLIVER – WOOLLEY 1911, 198, and 233; Tomb K3 belonged to a small, isolated group of burials located outside the town’s outer fortifications. It was plundered in ancient times and is dated to the mid-18th Dynasty, based on a scarab bearing the name of Thutmose III, or to a later period. This amulet was found on the floor of the first chamber (A), alongside some other amulets that were most probably dropped by the plunderers. Ivory, height: 3,5 cm. The owner is unknown, as no bones were left in the tomb. The other chambers contained only pottery. Penn Museum E10714; ROMANO 1989, 485-486, Catal.no. 168 with drawing.

9 Paris, Louvre, E23593, H: 1,5 cm, faience, from Zawiet el-Meytin, tomb E474, excavated by the

here. His face is wide, but there is no trace of beard.

This form appears to have remained largely unchanged later on, as can be seen in an amulet¹⁰ dated on the Petrie Museum homepage to the Third Intermediate Period, for example. Many of the amulets in this iconography are represented as a statuette.¹¹

CONDENSED SIMPLE BES

A small group of Bes amulets is made up of miniature, angular faience beads. In this group, the outline of the figure is arranged in a rectangular shape.



One example has been published from Serabit el-Khadim (LDUCE-UC35419). A similar piece is known from Megiddo (Oriental Institute Museum, A15936¹²), dating to the Late Bronze Age II period. This dates to the Egyptian occupation of the area, which began with Thutmose III and ended during the reign of Ramesses III. Following an earlier tradition, they are bead-amulets¹³, i.e. they are strung on a thread through a vertical hole in the body.

In Riqqeh, bead amulets were also strung into necklaces, as evidenced by a burial in Cemetery F in the shaft tomb of Apiy and his family (No. 201-202).¹⁴ The shafts were robbed shortly after the funerals, resulting in the attachments becoming considerably mixed up. Furthermore, the tomb was reused during the 23rd-26th Dynasties, with more than 65

Figure 2. Condensed Bes bead-amulets from Riqqeh, tomb of Apiy, no. 202, now in Munich Glyptothek.

EES. See PIACENTINI 1993, 72, 91, note 17.

10 LDUCE-UC37363, faience, 1,7x0,9 cm.

11 E.g. See Leiden, Rijksmuseum vor Oudheiden, CI-10, H: 2,2 cm (<https://hdl.handle.net/21.12126/13500>), or also there CI-91, H: 2,2 cm, <https://hdl.handle.net/21.12126/13499>. Both are made of faience, and have no finding place.

12 A15936: Found in Megiddo, Summit, SQ R-11, Room II/137, Field Number: 2483, turquoise faience, both sides in relief. H: 1,2 cm, HERRMANN 2003, 377. <https://isac-icb.uchicago.edu/id/5349307d-d134-4951-ad84-94c891140c7b>

13 The role of the bead can still be seen in some other cases. For example, a string in Barcelona (CAJA DE BURGOS 2011, 82-83) has the shape of a tiny, double-sided, unbearded carnelian Bes.

14 ENGELBACH 1915, 11 (section 25), pl. 16. The objects from the tombs of Apiy are shown on pl. xv, nos. 1 and 2 (with his titles); pl. xvi, nos. 2, 7, and 8; pl. xviii, nos. 86-105; pl. xix, no. 3; pl. xxii, nos. 4, 5, 10, 11, and 12; pl. xxviii, nos. 3 and 4. The tomb group is now in the Glyptothek, Munich, with the exception of the two fragments of Syrian and Mycenaean pots, which are now in the University College Collection."

additional burials being identified. Fortunately, the origin of these small amulets is well documented as they were found strung between the beads of Apiy's necklace¹⁵. Like some earlier amulets, they were pierced longitudinally.¹⁶ Given that Apiy's titles include '*Keeper of the Fields of Aten*' (*jmj-rꜣ ꜣḫ n 'In*), it is reasonable to conclude that he was buried during the Amarna period, and that his possessions were crafted during that period or during the reign of Amenhotep III. This composition appears to be a transitional form between the flattened figures and the two-sided, frontal unbearded ones.

However, the 18th Dynasty's typical method of stringing them vertically is also evident, as can be seen in Tomb 60 at Meydum (Petrie Museum, LDUCE-UC31155), where such an amulet is strung among Taweret, simple frontal or filigree Bes figures, lilies, fish and nefer signs. This string clearly shows that ornamental bow-legged and naturalistic filigree compositions existed at the same time. Concerning the suspension method, here a bead is soldered to the top of the head, as with all the other amulets in the necklace. Consequently, they are no longer beads, but pendants.



TWO-SIDED SIMPLE BES

Some pieces are worked on both sides, acting as an intermediate between plaque amulets and statuettes. However, they are kept so flat that the result is a two-sided relief rather than a three-dimensional statuette. Such amulets¹⁷ were usually made of stone rather than faience. They were pierced so that they could be worn as pendants. The most frequent stones used for this purpose were carnelian or red jasper. The Bes amulet has two flat, relief-like sides and is pierced horizontally for suspension. They measure between 1 and 2,5 cm. These flat, plaque-like pieces have two main varieties:

Figure 3. Carnelian Bes, two-sided relief © Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 72.872

15 ENGELBACH 1915, 11, tomb 202. (Apiy), München Glyptothek

16 GYÖRY 2001, 99-110.

17 E.g. Amsterdam, Allard Pierson Museum (WARMENBOL 2002, no. 102); Leiden RMO EG-ZM675, AA.VIII-21; Edinburg NMS inv. no. 1965.323; New York, Metropolitan Museum of Arts, inv. no. 10.130.1986.

those with or without sideburns. Each piece was carved individually, as can be seen in examples such as Boston¹⁸, Copenhagen¹⁹, Jerusalem,²⁰ Sydney,²¹ Leiden,²² Frankfurt,²³ Cambridge.²⁴ This great variety is partly due to the fact that they were cut individually. The figures' body follows in general the classical frontal Bes shape (A11 or A15), with either the front and back represented on the two sides, or the front on both sides.

Other materials, such as steatite, were rarely used alongside faience. An example of this is an amulet from Medinet Habu,²⁵ which dates back to the time of Ramesses III. This openwork figure has spread thighs and a large head. Its eyes are two pierced holes, its nose is round, and its mouth is horizontal. As both sides are worked in relief, the craftsman produced a figure flattened into a double-sided plaque or semi-statuettes.

Some of these pendants have been found in archaeological contexts. One such example is the tiny piece in the Oriental Museum, Chicago (OIM E21754B) found in tomb V48 in the New Kingdom cemetery at Qustul, numbered object 117,²⁶ alongside four Taweret amulets in a similar style, two of which were also cut from carnelian.

The other variation can be found e.g. in Paris,²⁷ Leiden,²⁸ the Metropolitan Museum²⁹, Bremen³⁰ or in Edinburgh³¹, where the body is formed

18 Museum of Fine Arts, 72.872, from the Hay collection, M: 2,2 x 1,1 x 0,5 cm. <https://collections.mfa.org/objects/133091/amulet-of-bes?ctx=5bd3509b-a5fb-4a76-bd32-f900bb418bea&idx=0>

19 Copenhagen: Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, AIN 1150, see Loeben 2020, 55, 4th row.

20 Jerusalem, Izrael Museum, 76-29-404, carnelian, H: 2,4 cm, <https://museum.imj.org.il/imagine/collections/itemCopy.asp?itemNum=338533>

21 Sydney, Nicholson Museum, NM84.77. M: 2.3 (h/l) x 1.4 (w) x 0.5 (d) cm, carnelian. https://www.sydney.edu.au/museums/collections_search/#search-results&view=details&id=985c&modules=ecatalogue&Titles=Bes&offset=8

22 Leiden, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RM-ZM674.

23 Frankfurt, Liebighaus inv. no. 2160, H: 2 cm, carnelian.

24 Bourriau 1979, 152 Nr. 15 pl. XXVII, 1. – E12.1977, carnelian, H: 2,1 cm.

25 OIM E15273 from Medinet Habu, H: 3,2 cm, steatite.

26 OIM 21754b, M: 0.90 x 0.50 x 0.25 cm, carnelian, see WILLIAMS – MURNANE 1992, 122, fig. 17y, pl. 49e, field number Q1997, p. 290: the assemblage is published under j, together with coffin fragments of F (mature senile male) and G (adult, mature male). All the 5 amulets are now in the Oriental Institute Museum.

27 Paris, Louvre, inv. no. AF11402, carnelian, H: 2,6x1,4 cm, <https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010031787>

28 Leiden, Rijksmuseum EG-ZM675, carnelian, H: 1,2 cm, unprovenienced.

29 New York, Metropolitan Museum 10.130.1986, carnelian, H: 1,9 cm, unprovenienced.

30 Bremen, B14271, H: 1,8 cm, carnelian. See FELGENHAUER 2015, 225-226.

31 Edinburgh, National Museum of Scotland, inv. no. A.1965.323, carnelian.

as usual, but the sideburns appear around the face.

B. FILIGREE BES FIGURES

Openwork amulets were manufactured depicting a slender, frontal nude Bes with his hands and legs akimbo. The trunk is narrow and cylinder-like, the legs are bent symmetrically to the side, and the hands rest on the thighs. Between the thighs, a tail hangs down to the base. Bes has a large, round face surrounded by a lion's mane and ears, and a suspension loop is positioned between them. The level of detail varies. The figure can stand alone or between two Taweret figures. This type may also be a two-sided plaque as thin as a relief.



Figure 4. Filigree Bes figures. 4a. © Metropolitan Museum 17.6.130, probably from Deir Ballas. 4b. © Brooklyn Museum, 37.914E. 4c. © Museum of Fine Arts Boston, 26-1-732, from Giza. d. © Petrie Museum LDUCE-UC52369b, also in Petrie, *Amulets* 189af

BASIC FILIGREE BES

This composition appears to form a rare iconographic group among the Bes amulets, although examples have been found at various sites, including Deir el-Ballas,³² Meydum,³³ or Tell Basta/Bubastis^{34, 35} All the amulets

32 New York, Metropolitan Museum 17.6.130, M: 2,4x1,2x0,5 cm. From Deir el-Ballas, acquired in 1917. Whitish faience, pierced with round holes. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/558131>

33 London, Petrie Museum LDUCE-UC31155, from el-Gereh (Meidum), tomb 60, excavated in 1911, two pieces strung onto a necklace, in the cemetery dated to the 17th-18th Dynasty, together with two other compositions of Bes, 2 nfr signs, 5 Tawerets, a fish, a lily flower and beads. (Also from the same cemetery LDUCE-UC31154 with tiny classical frontal Bes figure)

34 SAWI 1979, 38, tomb 66, pit grave for female, fig. 61, reg. no. B1672: deposits on the body: a scarab and 10 open work Bes with a Hathor head, average height are 2-2,5 cm.

35 This group also appears as statuette e.g. in Bologna (MCA-EGI-EG_0615) or in Torino (Cat671).

are slightly different, as are the unprovenienced pieces, for example the piece in the Petrie Museum³⁶. In Kobenhavn, Nationalmuseet, it is the central piece of a necklace from Amarna, containing many tiny amulets, representing Bes playing the tambourine.³⁷

Besides the above main development another one can be followed by an example from Cairo³⁸, which has parallels in the Brooklyn Museum³⁹, with just a few differences. Both miniature and standard-sized amulets seem to have been made in this shape.

There is also an incomplete Boston piece⁴⁰, which originates from the Giza Street 7000 debris, characterised by pendulous chests, a triangular face, and a round beard with a square border below the round ears. The button eyes are almond-shaped with arched eyebrows above them. The loop is broken off, but appears to have been part of the original design. A similar style also exists in openwork form (Boston MFA 72.2082⁴¹) having the physique similar to that. Another version can be found for instance in the Petrie Museum (Figure 4d), without known provenience, but this group was also crafted in statuette form, as the well-known pieces in Bologna or in Torino attest.

Evidence of the filigree iconography dates back a long way, as seen already in an openwork gold scarab bearing the cartouche of Amenemhat III (Metropolitan Museum 42.2.4)⁴² and a faience scarab inscribed with his name (Metropolitan Museum 26.2.1).⁴³, and moreover, there is a scene with him, accompanied by a pair of Taweret figures, as shown on certain 18th Dynasty amulets.

36 London, Petrie Museum: LDUCE-UC52369. It is registered together with a wedjat eye and a wadj column amulets, but it is not stated why they were together. .

37 Kobenhavn, Nationalmuseet faience, object ID8513, Genstandsnummer 9203. <https://samlinger.natmus.dk/as/object/8513>

38 CG38760, DARESSY 1905-1906/I, 193, pl. XLI, faience, H: 3,5 cm. worked on both side, but very flat.

39 Brooklyn Museum, 37.914E, faience, H: 3 cm. <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/4112> The same type, even possibly from the same moulds are 48.66.40, 48.66.41, 48.66.42, 48.66.43: faience, H: ca 3 cm, unprovenienced.

40 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 26-1-732, blue glazed faience. M: 0,5 x1,6 cm. Giza, debris of Street 7000; January 1926: excavated by the Harvard University – Museum of Fine Arts Expedition, led by G.A. Reisner. <https://collections.mfa.org/objects/405762/amulet-of-bes?ctx=f209afa0-b5de-40ec-b67a-ebed876eb29f&idx=180> In the same debris there were also tiny standard miniature frontal and profiled tambourine player Bes figures too (e.g. Boston Museum of Fine Art, 25.3025 and 26.1.809)

41 Hay collection from 1836, acquired by the Museum in 1872. Back flat and plain. H: 2,8 cm, blue faience. "Legs broken off, now in two pieces."

42 HAYES 1953, 236. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/545535>

43 HAYES 1953, 239; ROMANO 1989, Catalogue 60-61, no. 18.

BES FLANKED BY TWO TAWERET FIGURES

Figure 5. Bes between two Taweret figures. © Chicago Art Institute 1894.908

The same filigree Bes figure can also be found standing between two Taweret figures within a rectangular frame. The earliest documented example of this arrangement was found in the Amarna Workmen's Village. Although few amulets are recorded here, one is listing an openwork Bes figure standing between two Taweret figures.⁴⁴ Similar compositions, albeit without provenance, are held by the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston (72.2699)⁴⁵, as well as by museums in Cambridge⁴⁶, Chicago⁴⁷, New York⁴⁸.

Again an example, in a different style, can be found in Manchester (7431⁴⁹) originating from Qau el-Kebir. These amulets are usually made of faience⁵⁰, but the Museo Egizio in Turin has an example⁵¹ made of glazed steatite. Solid varieties were manufactured too, albeit rarely (e.g. PETRIE 1914, no. 189c).

44 CoA I, 86: (Long Wall Street) No. 12. living room: "green glaze amulet, A.4, Bes between two Taurts" – not in ASFD.

45 unprovenienced, from the Hay collection (1836), M: 2,5x2,5 cm.

46 Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum: E.GA.6093.1947, Gayet Anderson collection. I thank the study picture to Helen Strudwick.

47 Chicago Art Institute, inv. no. 1894.908, H: 1,9 cm, faience, Murch collection. ALLEN 1923, 131. <https://www.artic.edu/artworks/140870/amulet-of-the-god-bes-flanked-by-the-goddess-taweret-thoeris>

48 New York, Metropolitan Museum inv. no. 15.6.13, gold sheet, H: 2,6 cm, unprovenienced. Inv. no. 15.6.14 seems to be the same composition, with same size – but without picture in the online database.

49 Manchester Museum inv. no. 7431: M: 2,3x2 cm, dated to Dyn. 21, from the excavation of the British School of Archaeology / BRUNTON 1930, 22, pl. XLIII, no. 70, tomb 2046: female body with a necklace of beads, this Bes and a scarab (XVIII.37) – "Late grave".

50 See e.g. Birmingham inv. no. BMAG1969W1212, H: 2,2 cm, faience, see CHAPMAN online exhibition.

51 Torino, Cat.650, steatite, 1,7 x 1,9 x 0,3 cm, NK (online Catalogue / https://collezioni.museoegizio.it/en-GB/material/Cat_650/?description=&inventoryNumber=&title=&cgt=&yearFrom=&yearTo=&materials=f03de8c3e5264877a286471995e6a590&provenance=&acquisition=&epoch=&dynasty=&pharaoh=

WINGED BES

Figure 6. Winged Bes from Armant
© Manchester Museum 10731a.

The winged figure is a rare type of Bes amulets. In the majority of known examples, the figure holds a basket in each hand beside its head. The baskets may contain various objects, the most common of which is the wedjat eye. The legs are in the usual bent position and the tail is positioned between them. The wings turn down and grow out of the armpits or elbows. Following the general pattern, the amulet is suspended from a loop at the top of the head. The figure is usually nude, but a version wearing a kilt was also produced. No archaeologically dated amulets of this kind are known, but a seal bearing the impression of a winged Bes in a similar position, with snakes emerging from his head,⁵² was found in Sedment, in tomb D406. This seal is dated to the reign of Thutmose IV – Amenhotep III.⁵³ Thus, the concept of using him as a protective symbol against harmful beings is documented from this time period.

A Manchester fragmentary openwork amulet (inv. no. 10731b) from Armant is made of faience and has the filigree figure of Bes with wings on either side. He is standing on a baseline, just as his counterpart (Manchester 10731a⁵⁴) is. However, the latter is intact, enabling us to see the bent arms holding a wedjat eye in a basket on either side. The chest and belly are emphasised. The rounded head is typical of Bes, with leonine features and an arched, round name. Both pieces originate from Armant. Even those without an origin, e.g. in the Hay Collection at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, already

52 See GYÓRY 2001b

53 PETRIE – BRUNTON 1924/1, pl. 13, no. 21 with the two cartouches, p. 23: given to Edinburgh; see also PETRIE – BRUNTON 1924/2, 25, pl. 57, no. 18. A Bes-vase was also found in the same tomb, together with a jar bearing the name of Horemheb. (PETRIE – BRUNTON 1924/1, pl. 40, no. 41.)

54 Manchester, 10731.a, M: 2,25x1,85 cm, pale green faience, from Armant. <https://museumcollections.manchester.ac.uk/collections/item/43b0b31a-c0d2-3919-a143-ae4e943c4f51/?s%3D10731&pos=5>

have the feather crown⁵⁵, as does the piece in Paris⁵⁶, which is topped by a double ring. The wing has degraded. Petrie also knew of a glazed, violet amulet from the 18th Dynasty⁵⁷ that followed the same basic pattern, but was solid.

However, Bes also appears in other poses. For example, he can be seen in a composition in Cambridge⁵⁸. Here, his arms are outstretched almost horizontally and his wings are turned downwards. A tongue tops his head, and a ring is soldered on top of this. Another amulet from Tell Basta in London⁵⁹ depicts him standing with his arms outstretched upwards and an arched wing below them. The entire composition is set within an angular frame and features openwork beside the legs. In the bottom right corner (the left corner is broken and missing), an indistinct figure can be seen below the wing. A similar framed Bes with a feather crown is also in the Louvre.⁶⁰ This presents the scene by modelling the arm and wing horizontally and featuring a wedjat eye facing outwards in each upper corner, as well as two straight serpents emerging from under his feet on both lower sides.

An openwork specimen in Frankfurt⁶¹ is said to originate from Thebes. It has a round, bearded head with a round ear beside the baskets with the wedjat eyes, which he holds on either side with his hands. The trunk is stout and cylindrical, and the kilt completely covers his thighs. The wings hang down from the elbow to the base. The date is unknown, but as winged kilted Bes representations are known as bed ornaments in the tombs of Tuya and Yuya, and Tutankhamun, it is highly likely that this amulet was manufactured in the late 18th Dynasty.

55 Boston Museum of Fine Arts, inv. no. 72.2089, H: 3,8 cm, faience. The object on the basket is indistinctive.

56 Paris, Louvre, AF9576, faience, H: 4x2,09 cm, from Henry Salt in 1826. The corner below his right arm is broken and missing.

57 PETRIE 1914, 189f.

58 Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, E.GA.1006.1947, Gayet Anderson collection. I thank the study picture to Helen Strudwick.

59 Among Miscellaneous faience objects from Bubastis, Petrie Museum: inv. no. LDUCE-UC59817, faience.

60 Paris, Louvre AF13075, faience, H: 4,6x4,6 cm. CAUBET – PIERRAT-BONNEFOIS 2005, 100, 103, ill. p. 101, no 266. <https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010038568>

61 Frankfurt, Liebighaus, inv. no. 2083, 3,4 x 2,5 x 0,4 cm, acquisition in 1881. See SCHLICK-NOLTE – DROSTE 1990, 229, no, 191. As parallels given: SCHIAPARELLI 1887, 114 Nr. 932, faience, H: 3,9 cm; BALLOD 1913, 48 Abb. 37 – the later one is a new year flask from Gurob (PETRIE 1891, 17, pl. XVII.)

BES WITH RIBBON

Figure 7a. Bes figure with ribbon from a necklace probably from Petrie's Abydos excavation. Part of © Boston MFA 03.1774.

Among the frontal dwarf amulets with and without mane, there is a special clothed variation.⁶² If these figures were not represented with a round head and standing with their legs splayed to the sides, they would be classified as Pataikos. Some of them depict the god with bent legs, others depict him with his thighs horizontal, in line with traditional ancient Egyptian illustration method, presenting the most important view. The god wears a ribbon, i.e. a strip of linen tied around the waist which hangs where the tail would be. Examples are known from Abydos⁶³ and Harageh.⁶⁴ The Abydos example has a loop on top of the head that resembles a headdress. Except the ribbon, all the other features are consistent with representations in either the filigree or the basic group. There are also several intermediate pieces, where the face is rounded without the mane being worked out, and instead of the tail the ribbon can be clearly seen.⁶⁵ Another intermediate direction is, openwork or solid, where the thighs of the god are enlarged such a way, that they make him look as wearing a kilt.⁶⁶ It is still an open question whether this type of representation made the kilt appear, or the degraded kilt became the large thighs. The Boston Museum of Fine Arts collection (72.2080⁶⁷) also

62 This same shape appears without the suspension loop also in Megiddo, (OIM20508 = LBII, c.1520-1400 BC) as the degraded and partly diversly understood form of a standard Bes figure – strip of ribbon and kilt seem to be present together (see figure in kilted group)

63 Boston MFA 03.1774, possibly from Abydos, 1903, dated to the 18th Dynasty. L of the necklace: 24,5 cm. <https://collections.mfa.org/download/130561>

64 LDUCE-UC73973, dated to the 19th Dynasty; without further data.

65 E.g. Metropolitan Museum, 09.180.2340 from a New Kingdom house in Lisht. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/568908>

66 Similar feature can be seen e.g. at a Rifeh amulet, given only in drawing by PETRIE 1907, pl. XXVII.L, no. 410, from the main cemetery, dated to the time of Amenhotep II – Thutmose IV. The horizontal closure between the legs might hint at a kilt, but as it ends above the knee, it is most probably only a simplification because of the tiny size. Petrie does not give any tomb number it belonged to. Neither the present location is known, and the drawing is too schematic to take any precise conclusion.

67 Boston MFA 72.2080, H: 4,2 cm, plain back. Hay collection, without provenance. <https://collections.mfa.org/objects/134579/amulet-of-bes?ctx=6a16d35b-34e3-4b3f-a8de-628e8f7abe0a&idx=0>

features a much more worn and crude variation with a feather crown.



Figure 7b. Necklace with Bes figures probably from Petrie's excavation in Abydos. © Boston MFA 03.1774.

Finally, I would like to present a figure from the Ashmolean Museum's exhibition.⁶⁸ The front of the plaque depicts an actual statuette's front side.

68 Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, inv. no. AN 1896-1908-E.1796, M: 3,3x1,7x0,9 cm, grey steatite, from excavation in Mahasna in 1901. <https://collections.ashmolean.org/object/753155>,

A Bes figure is wearing a fashionable, pleated Ramesside ribbon instead of the kilt. He has a large, barrel-like belly above the ankle-length piece of cloth, while his hands are covering the whole thighs at both sides. His chest is almost hidden by his round mane. It surrounds his head like a collar and extends to both sides of his large, open mouth. His eyes appear as two holes on either side of his small nose, at the level of his round and small ears. Instead of a forehead, there is a triple-grooved suspension loop.

Notably, many Bes figures from this period had a back, forming a real statuette that could be set up more safely, suggesting a new way of using these amulets. Petrie and Pendlebury do not seem to distinguish between statuette and plaque forms, as the iconographic features are similar. However, this study only discusses amulets used as plaque.

Bes wearing a kilt (P285 / A14)



Figure 8. Bes figure from Semna, wearing the kilt below the ribbon.

© Boston MFA 27.903a,

This shape is similar to the simple, nude Bes figures, except for the kilt he wears. The torso is tubular in shape, becoming potbellied in later variants, with a kilt-like design sitting below the navel. The head is disproportionately large and round, with a beard around the chin and rounded ears set high up. The eyes are usually large and set in oval sockets. Sometimes they bulge out and at other times the deep socket is left empty. This latter feature appears to be associated to the potbellied variant, though I could find only a few examples, so this may be coincidental. He stands with bowed legs and wears a kilt from which a strip of ribbon falls down to the base. The suspension loop is shaped like a low headdress. Most of the pieces seem to be openwork, but not exclusively. Among the relief-like figures were real statuettes made in various styles.

Bes wearing a kilt with vertical pleats and a long strip of ribbon was found in Saft el Henneh (LDUCE-UC64894)⁶⁹. He has a disproportionately

without picture. I thank to find it and the data information to Anastasia Hanna, Ancient & Oriental Department in the Ashmolean Museum.

⁶⁹ London, Petrie Museum LDUCE-UC64894. According to the online catalogue, it was found by Petrie in a tomb of Saft el Henneh, referring to PETRIE 1906, 38, pl.37, no.36 (scarab). This

large head and large eyes. He has a beard surrounding his wide mouth, the horizontal line in which might be a hint of a tongue. His face is completely human and his beard bears no resemblance to a lion's mane. The same iconography appears in a piece from Tomb S563 in Semna⁷⁰, but with a differently styled head. This piece was discovered by the Harvard expedition in 1924. Here, the surface is completely plain. The almond-shaped eyes bulge out of the sockets and the mouth is marked by two horizontal lines. The body merges into the strip of ribbon forming a column-like support beneath the mask-like head. The suspension is resolved by a long, grooved loop. A similar amulet to this one can be found in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston also without provenience (72.2084)⁷¹. Although the material and style differ noticeably, both draw inspiration from a common ancestor.

As already mentioned the thighs in the straddling position appear sometimes excessively fat, merging into the raised ribbon and thus creating the impression that a kilt is being worn beneath the ribbon. This feature is also evident in the solid Qustul specimen (OIM21192⁷²) from the post-Amarna period. Furthermore, another variation is when the strip of ribbon is formed halfway as a tail and halfway as a regular ribbon. Also the trunk might be changed into a swelling belly, into which the head has melted. The round beard might also be missing, the mouth become indistinct. Usually a wide suspension loop crowns the head. These pieces represent intermediate state between the basic frontal Bes figure and the kilted one.

FIGURE IN KILT FRAMED

A special group was created when the kilted figure became positioned within an angular frame. This openwork composition was evident in Amarna,

leads to tomb 151 according to the table of Petrie. He described this burial in p. 38 as follows: "The skeleton lay on back with head to north-west, and face up. A considerable quantity of blue glazed flat beads was found at the pelvis. One blue glazed figure of Bast, A. 26, two smaller glazed pendants, and a black scarab, S. 28, and another, S. 36, complete the contents."

70 Boston MFA 27.903a, 3,5 cm, faience, blue glazed, with flat back from Semna. <https://collections.mfa.org/objects/146310/amulet-of--bes?ctx=c3fc2080-56ee-49c5-bc22-8e50e60888c3&idx=0>.

Two other similar pieces (27.903b-c) were also given to the Museum at the division of finds.

71 Boston MFA 72.2084, 3,5 cm, plain back. Hay collection, without provenance. <https://collections.mfa.org/objects/137525/amulet-of-bes?ctx=51323755-943d-46bb-bef8-8e6f033fc650&idx=0>

72 OIM E21192, 3,6 cm, WILLIAMS-MURNANE 1992, 121: R35-19, very large, crude / p. 124, fig.17t, p. 192: 41j ; p. 188-202: tomb R35, a large, multiple burial tomb: shaft with two end-chambers, with different levels; p. 199: with b, no. 19 - the same 2nd level with OIM E21324 / domino group; THEN-OBŁUSKA 2022, 294: Amulet, Bes, in shaft, level 2, with burials G-N (G — younger infant, H — mature male, I — mature female, J — senile individual, K — mature female, L — juvenile female, M —, N —); OIM E21192, New Kingdom, post-Amarna period.



Petrie 1984,
no. 285

and both Petrie and Pendlebury assigned it a unique identification number, which I have used for the entire kilted group. In order to secure the figure within the frame, the god's posture has been altered so that he is holding the frame on both sides. His slender torso has taken on a tubular shape, and his head is surrounded by a beard forming a kind of mane. His broad ears are positioned directly below the top of the frame, into which a multi-grooved loop is inserted. Below the navel, he wears a knee-length kilt and a strip of the tail reaches the lower band of the frame. This kilted figure would have been familiar to the people of Amarna, as it was found in both the Main City (K.51.3⁷³) and the North Suburb (T.33. ⁷⁴, T.34. ⁷⁵). It was manufactured in a local factory, as evidenced by a mould found in the area. ⁷⁶

FLATTENED BES



Figure 10. Mould for a flattened Bes figure. © Fitzwilliam Museum E.GA.3732.1943

A completely flattened variant was produced around the Amarna period. Two items: in Cambridge⁷⁷ and one in Dijon⁷⁸ may mark the beginning of this group. Bes is wearing a pleated kilt with a long, vertically striped ribbon running down the centre of the cloth. Both his hands rest on the kilt at the midpoint of the tights. The torso protrudes slightly. His head is proportionately large and surrounded by a mane with protruding ears. It is topped by a feathered crown. The background blends into both sides and a wavy line borders the area between the shoulder and the crown. There appears to be a small snake's head at the base of the feathers. As usual, he is standing with his

⁷³ CoA I, 18, W. Quarter – together with Bes statuette type A13.

⁷⁴ CoA II, 69, 79, without a picture.

⁷⁵ CoA II, 63, 79, without a picture.

⁷⁶ PETRIE 1894, pl. 17, no. 285.

⁷⁷ Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum: E.GA.5697.1943, I thank the picture for the study to Helen Strudwick, Fitzwilliam Museum. There is also a mould in the collection (Figure 10): E.GA.3732.1943 (<https://collection.beta.fitz.ms/id/object/58171>) for such a figure. Size not given. Unfortunately neither of them has known origin.

⁷⁸ LAURENT – DESTI 1997, 167, Cat. no. 218.3.9: faïence égyptienne, H: 4,2 cm, « coiffure écornée ». Exemplaire finement détaillé.

legs bent on a baseline.

A later phase in the development of the topic might be depicted by the Budapest amulet.⁷⁹ The unprovenienced piece in the Museum of Fine Arts (51.1709) is more schematic. Here the kilt has vanished and the thighs have been transformed into recumbent triangular units. A wide ribbon runs between the thighs — this may be the actual ribbon, while at the legs it abruptly narrowed, and continued perhaps as the tail. The feather crown is lower, showing only the outlines. Two remnants refer to the ears. A snakelike wave protrudes from both sides of the mane, which also looks snakelike at the edges. The cylindrical suspension bead was soldered on top as the final step in the manufacturing process.

The Boston figure (MFA 72.2085) only has an upper body and bears some resemblance to the Budapest figure. However, the details are more accentuated, and the arms are openwork. The domed torso features an unusually large navel. The oval head has a distorted face and a mane reaching to the arm below the large ears. The wavy lines protruding from both sides of the head do not resemble a snake. In this case, the suspension is created by doubling the ring bead on top of the amulet.

Another feature can be observed in a Bes figure found in Malkata (House B, Metropolitan Museum 11.215.217), and in another figure in the Egyptian collection in Lille (L 992), which originates from Mirgissa⁸⁰. In both cases, the figures are highly schematic, with hands lying on the thighs and an extremely short trunk, while the head is oversized. Even then, the facial details can only be seen very difficultly: sunken eyes, a short nose and lappet ears. Only the bulging edge of the snake's shape remains. The Mirgissa piece is topped by a feathered headdress and suspended by a double ring, as is the Malkata amulet.

C. CLASSICAL BES FIGURE

The frontal nude figure is standing in a crouching position on a baseline, with his hands on his thighs and his tail tucked between his legs. From this angle, the thighs appear shorter, creating the impression of a dwarfish being. The rounded head, which is still without the feathered crown, rests directly on the chest and has large ears on the upper part. The face has a stubby nose between deep-set eyes and a wide mouth, above a circular, lion-like beard or mane surrounding the jaw. The torso can be slender, full-bodied, or even corpulent. The typical material used is faience.

79 The author's study concerning it is in press.

80 Mirgissa, Sanctuaire d'Hathor. Numéro de fouille: MF2, faience, 3,6 x 2 x 0,4 cm. Now in Lille, L992, see <http://www.globalegyptianmuseum.com/record.aspx?id=7278>

BASIC CLASSICAL BES (P290 / A15)



Figure 11a. Classical Bes figure from Amarna © Petrie Museum, LDUCE-UC1135.
 11b. Mould of a classical Bes figure from Malkata, © Metropolitan Museum 12.180.375

The classical figure was represented in tiny and larger size where the details were usually depicted more elaborately. These features resulted in both Petrie's typology and later for the Amarna material in two different typological groups. Although the main characteristics of the iconographic structure are the same as that of the tiny classical figure, the style of each larger figure may be differently shaped, adding various details. Some of the most significant differences are: tongue sticking out/not shown; round beard/mane with lappet-like wings; undecorated belly/trunk with dots/strips; face round/triangular; ears level with the top of the head/at mid-height; and legs slightly/deeply bent. These features follow the same trends as the Bes representations on other objects studied by Romano, so only a few samples are mentioned here.

These amulets are well-known in many places, particularly Malkata and Amarna. At this stage, the face exhibits distinct features such as a rectangular or rounded beard, a trilobe nasal tip and deep eye sockets. LDUCE-UC1135 (Amarna, H: 2,85 cm), for example, clearly shows the typical features, including the hieroglyph-shaped mouth with a short tongue in it and convex forehead with two V-shaped grooves marking the wrinkles. The chest is domed and the belly is egg-shaped. Between the bent legs, a narrow tail hangs down to the base. A similar piece is LDUCE-UC1133 (Amarna, height: 3,1 cm), which exhibits

these features, albeit less clearly defined and with slight modifications. The figure has ball-shaped eyes, and the bridge of the nose practically vanishes between them. Another fragmentary piece (LDUCE-UC31080, height: 2,85 cm) was found in the Meydum cemetery. This piece is slightly modified and has a protruding beard on the sides of a round head, the lower half of which is encircled. It is unclear whether this is the lower end of the jaw or a wide tongue.

In a piece previously in the Wellcome Collection 153855 (LDUCE-UC74686), a narrow tongue can be seen clearly reaching the bottom of the jaw. Below the angular beard, another angular line extends towards the chest. Although undecorated, the body appears to be striped on the sides. The piece was part of a string, but unfortunately, the location of its discovery is unknown.

The style of the inner decoration of the figure is completely different from that of the unprovenanced Bes in the World Museum, Liverpool⁸¹ (11712a, H: 3,3 cm). The details are carved into the leather-hard faience figure, which resembles a statuette but has a plain, undecorated plaque on the back with two vertical cuts behind the depression beside the arms. The carving on the front of the belly and arms suggests a type of clothing, and the head is surrounded by a double-banded beard-mane below. The accentuated facial features are characteristic of later Bes faces, and the long, protruding tongue is also present, albeit to a lesser extent.

Another variation was produced by changing the method of suspension; instead of a bead or thin loop, a diadem-like loop can be seen on top of the head of a piece from Semna.⁸²

This diversity is also evident in a large number of other pieces. Several moulds also attest to this. Relief pieces using shallow moulds, such as one from Malkata in the Metropolitan Museum (12.280.364⁸³), were manufactured. Here the head is depicted in great detail: The leonine grooves around the button eye give the piece an animalistic appearance, emphasised by the long, wiry beard. The line of the tongue is also marked above this in the wide open mouth. The forehead is adorned with thick, V-shaped wrinkles. A long suspension loop is modelled on top. The oval belly has short stripes on both sides. This mould was found in the South Magazines' area of the Factories Quarter in Malkata, where amulets were probably produced in large quantities.

81 It presents the same pattern on the body as a 2,5 cm high goldsheet amulet in the Atlanta (Emory), Michael C. Carlos Museum 2004.062. <https://collections.carlos.emory.edu/objects/11445/bes-amulet>.

82 Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 28.1606, M: 1,5x0,8 cm, from area between Cross St.9 and S. Wall St., excavated by the Harvard University-Museum of Fine Arts Expedition, 1928. For the suspension a diadem-like loop is made.

83 New York, Metropolitan Museum 12.180.364, 4,3x3,2x1,5 cm, South Magazines or Factories, 1910-1912.

Another mould from Malkata, South Village (Metropolitan Museum 12.180.375⁸⁴) features a completely different style of modelling. The standing figure with arms akimbo is depicted in the typical pose with hands on thighs. It has a round head topped by a long suspension loop between two large, protruding ears. His deep-set, almond-shaped eyes almost conceal his nose. The trilobed lower part sits directly on top of the lips, which are broken in the middle to reveal the small tongue. Below the face, there is a triple angular line: the top line represents a round beard divided into sections by short strokes, and the bottom line represents the chest. A small hole halfway between the chest and the navel may denote an amulet. Traces of strips on either side of his belly can just be made out.

Once again, in Amarna, two seemingly identical moulds (Penn Museum, M.E.686 and E733⁸⁵) appear to have been crafted from the same prototype, adopting a style quite distinct from those at Malkata. Traces of the strip on the sides of the belly are still visible, but it has been transformed into a series of knobs. The angular line of the chest has become zigzag-like, and the facial features and round beard have been simplified. The eyes are almost level with the skin of the face, and a long tongue sticks out of the wide-open mouth. Figures were probably mass-produced at the factory site.

Several other styles of Bes were, of course, also manufactured in Amarna. I would like to present one final example to illustrate how the previous generation of figures was updated. The Allard Pierson Museum in Amsterdam has a mould with the inventory number 140⁸⁶. This figure's shape is similar to that of the first mentioned Malkata mould (MET12.280.364), with a striped belly, a bearded head, a V-shaped line on the forehead, large round ears, and deep-set, almond-shaped eyes. However, the mouth appears closed and the head is triangular with a two-tiered, curved beard collar, making the figure less scary.

MINIATURE CLASSICAL BES (P291 / A11)

Following the classical representations, many small frontal Bes amulets are manufactured, not much higher than 1 cm. Their bodies are average and

84 New York, Metropolitan Museum 12.180.375: 3,1x2,5 cm, Khor west of camp or E. side of South Village, 1911-1912.

85 For both moulds presenting the same shape of Bes: WEGNER – WEGNER – SILVERMAN 2006, pl. 40, fig. 34. They originate from Amarna, factory site, and were given by Petrie in 1893. Inv. no. E686: 4 cm; E733: 3,17 cm.

86 SCHEURLEER 1909, 58, no. 28; SNIJDER 1956, p. 12, no. 68. H: 4,2 cm. Purchased in Cairo in 1902, acquisition by the Museum in 1934. I would like to thank Branko von Oppen de Ruyter to call my attention to it.



Figure 11c. Miniature Bes pendants from Amarna, H: 1,3 cm. © Petrie Museum, LDUCE-UC23686.

their legs are akimbo, either bent or occasionally splayed. They are made of glazed faience in a variety of shades. They are suspended by a ring or loop at the top of the head. This figure is Petrie's Amarna publication type no. 291,⁸⁷ equivalent to Pendlebury's A11 in the Amarna Corpus books. A similar example in Petrie's book on Amulets bears no.188s, although the body is more elongated in the drawing.

In addition to the other Bes plaques and statuette-amulets⁸⁸ found in Amarna, several frontal Bes figures in simple relief depict this small human figure. Petrie wrote that these were mainly found in large quantities in three or four glass factories and two large glazing workshops in the Main City.⁸⁹ Pendlebury's team continued the excavation there and also found a large number of A11 Bes amulets. Petrie documented these not only in factories, but also in five houses in the Main City, two in the North Suburb and three in the Workmen's Village. The heavy local Amarna production is also evident from the numerous moulds found in various collections.⁹⁰ More than half of these moulds are of type A11 or its variants, in both solid and openwork forms.⁹¹ This type of amulet was clearly popular, and not only in Amarna, but all over Egypt.

In addition to the other Bes plaques and statuette-amulets⁸⁸ found in Amarna, several frontal Bes figures in simple relief depict

For example, the drawing from Gurob of a piece of the same general shape is a good representation of a finely elaborated standard frontal Bes figure.⁹² A ring bead fused to the top of the head enables the figure to be

87 It might be identical with LDUCE-UC23686 (a), H:1,3 cm.

88 Numbered by PETRIE 1894, no. 290, coded in CoA by A15 (as e.g. in house K51.4 (CoA I, 18)

89 PETRIE 1894, p. 25.

90 Such as London, Petrie Museum (LDUCE-UC46187, LDUCE-UC47063, LDUCE-UC47133, LDUCE-UC47134, LDUCE-UC47135, LDUCE-UC47137, LDUCE-UC47143, LDUCE-UC47144, LDUCE-UC47145, LDUCE-UC47147); Chicago, Oriental Institute Museum (E489, 15359-15362); Boston Museum of Fine Arts (36.501-503, 36.505); Philadelphia, Penn Museum (686, 733) or Swansea, The Egypt Centre (EC671) among others.

91 E.g. LDUCE-UC2024, H: 1,3 cm, from Amarna.

92 BRUNTON – ENGELBACH 1927, pl. XLII, no. 1E, tomb 450. For the tomb assemblage see pl. XVII: only pieces belonging to a necklace. The tomb is not described neither mentioned in the

suspended from a necklace, a typical solution during the reigns of Amenhotep III and Akhenaten. The beard merges with the mouth and extends around below the ears, which are positioned high on the head and rounded like a lion's. The piece was found beside a child lying on its back in the sand. The assemblage consisted of a Pataikos amulet, a squatting figure classified as an ape, a degraded ape-like figure, a human-headed uraeus and an oval pendant (44e), as well as the aforementioned Bes amulet. These were suspended by a bead or perpendicular hole, while the degraded ape-like figure was drilled vertically. The tomb is located near the S point, below the layer of town sherds and slightly north-west of the remains of a large hall.⁹³ The surrounding tombs date from the time of Thutmose III to the Ramesside period, so the burial must have occurred during this timeframe, when the cemetery began to occupy the deserted town.

Other pieces originating from an archaeological context come from Malkata. They depict either a group⁹⁴ with a narrow amulet representing the usual figure facing frontally with slightly bent legs and a narrow tail that curves at the bottom, or a rarer group⁹⁵ representing him in a straddling position with his thighs displayed horizontally, his legs going vertically down. In both groups, the figure has a leonine beard surrounding the head and large, round ears. The colours vary, and simple or double beads are often used for suspension.

The popularity of this type of amulet throughout Egypt is evident from its presence in several other locations. In the New Kingdom cemetery at Bubastis, for example, children's burials in jar contained amulets of this type, which were used alongside the domino type in tomb 191.⁹⁶ Other sites where

distribution list - the objects are probably kept in the Petrie Museum, London or remained in Cairo.

93 For the site see BRUNTON – ENGELBACH 1927, pl. II.

94 E.g. New York, Metropolitan Museum 11.215.173; MET11.215.174; MET11.215.175; 11.215.217 (House B).

95 E.g. New York, Metropolitan Museum 11.215.170: Malkata palace, 1,3 cm; London, Petrie Museum LDUCE-UC1125, H: 1 cm, also from Amarna.

96 SAWI 1979, p. 15, tomb 5, No 1531, fig. 10, 13: necklace with 2 wedjats, a domino and a Petrie 188s Bes types; p. 26, tomb 30, fig. 10, reg. no. 1621: on the chest ape, Bes, and unidentifiable amulet; p. 26, tomb 41, fig. 40, reg. no. 1635: near the body: 2 wedjats, ape, Bes and Bastet figures; p. 30, tomb 45, fig. 47, 33, reg. no. 1593: wedjat, 2(?) Bes, hippo, Bastet, Pataikos and ape amulets in a necklace; p. 89, tomb 191, fig. 215, reg. no. 1960 described the necklace to contain both the domino type and a frontal naturalistic Bes amulet – this latter one between a Harpocrates and an Isis knot amulets.

they have been found include Memphis,⁹⁷ Rifeh⁹⁸, Riqqeh⁹⁹, Meydum¹⁰⁰ and Giza¹⁰¹, although the exact location of the pieces is unknown. There are also many amulets or moulds of unknown origin.¹⁰²

Many amulets in various collections and at art dealers follow this same iconography to a greater or lesser extent. However, due to their size, the details such as the eyes, nose, mouth, large ears, beard, arms, tail and legs are barely discernible, if at all, and the actual pieces show many variations. The figure may be stocky or slender; the hands may be positioned at various places around the thighs, hips or belly; the head may be round or triangular; but all have a beard that resembles a mane and large ears high up on the head. The shades are blue, green, yellow, white and red.

II. DANCING BES IN PROFILE

In ancient Egyptian art, anthropoid figures are typically depicted in profile, showing their most distinctive features. However, there were a few exceptions, such as the antecedents of Bes figures. Earlier on, it was customary for Aha, Hit and other guardian deities to be depicted frontal.¹⁰³ This trend continued during the 18th Dynasty. However, for a few decades, things changed and Bes also appeared in profile.

From dateable archaeological contexts, it appears that amulets portraying Bes in profile first emerged in Malkata during the reign of Amenhotep III.¹⁰⁴ Nevertheless, the vast majority of excavated specimens date to the Amarna period. Unlike ornamental plaque amulets, this Bes figure is never depicted in a static pose. Here, the bearded, nude Bes with a long tail on his back is moving to the right in a dance step. The back of his head is covered by what can best be described as a lion's mane.

The New Kingdom Egyptians had already been preoccupied by the

97 Manchester mould: 4886; London, Petrie Museum inv. no. LDUCE-UC69057 and LDUCE-UC69082.

98 E.g. London, Petrie Museum LDUCE-UC38838.

99 Manchester 6156b.

100 London, Petrie Museum LDUCE-UC31080 (H: 2,85 cm) and LDUCE-UC31134 (H: 1,45x0,7 cm)

101 E.g. Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Harvard Expedition, inv. no. 25.3025 from Street 7000 debris-

102 E.g. London, Petrie Museum, LDUCE-UC74687; Swansea, The Egypt Centre EC671; Boston MFA 72.2081, 72.2087, etc.

103 See the analysis of the shape and essence of Aha and his female counterpart at VINK 2024.

104 <https://www.metmuseum.org/blogs/now-at-the-met/2015/Malkata-excavation> states that it was a jubilee city for Amenhotep III, used *only for his sed festivals*.

question of how to depict a dancing person in the form of an amulet. The earliest evidence of this concept was found in the tomb of a child (408¹⁰⁵) in Gurob, dating back to the time of Thutmose III. Although the tomb had been disturbed, various accessories remained inside. Among them were two amulets with a ring bead on top depicting two unidentifiable persons in a



frontal position with their legs shown from the side . The figures are dancing in opposite directions and the amulets were worn around the neck, strung together with other miniature amulets in a naturalistic style. This class is also present in Amarna.¹⁰⁶

Four main typological groups can be distinguished among the dancing Bes figures: those with no attributes and those holding an instrument, namely a tambourine, double flute or harp. He is also represented holding a snake in the form of a ring pattern.¹⁰⁷ They were made in different sizes. The plaque is only decorated on the front; the back is always plain.

A. DANCING BES WITHOUT AN INSTRUMENT

From the viewer's perspective, the figure in this group is facing right. His legs are positioned as though he is about to dance on a baseline, with his right arm holding the long tail. The left arm is bent in front of the chest. The figure is bearded, nude, and appears to be grabbing or reaching for the tail extending from his rump. The head is leonine in appearance, although its shape varies. The relief is suspended by a bead attached to the top of the head. This Bes motif first appeared in relief on elite furniture. The amulet shape appears to have been fully developed by the time of the Amarna period, although the earliest examples were found in Malkata. Three main variations in the posture of the head can be discerned, each with several variants, as if the ancient Egyptians were experimenting. Although the figures were manufactured using clay moulds, only unique faience pieces have survived. The existence of this group demonstrates the importance of right-facing dancing movements. In this example, Bes does not hold any instruments, though there are versions in

105 Brunton – Engelbach 1927, 14, pl. XXV, tomb 408, fig. no. 12 and 13. They were sent to Oxford.

106 PETRIE 1894, pl. XVII. no. 275.

107 Manchester, Fitzwilliam Museum E.GA.3623.1943, H: not given (<https://data.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/id/object/58052>), E.GA.3624.1943, H: 1,7 cm. <https://collection.beta.fitz.ms/id/object/58053>

which he stands next to a protective sign.

BES WITH FACE TURNED TO THE FRONT



Figure 12a. Dancing Bes figure. Part of © Metropolitan Museum 11.215.217

A bag containing four linen-wrapped necklaces¹⁰⁸ was found in House B of the private residence in Malkata. One of these was the well-known menat necklace (11.215.450), while two other strings were found with various amulets and beads featuring Hathor heads, Taweret and crocodiles. The longer string also contained various figures of Bes, including a plaque amulet depicting a Bes figure with a long tail, dancing to the right with a triangular head facing forwards (11.215.217).¹⁰⁹ His left arm is bent towards his chest, as though moving it up and down quickly. The details are obscured by the thick glaze, but the face appears leonine with a lion's mane reaching the shoulders. The ears are not visible. Two ring beads soldered on top are used for suspension.

Another figure in a similar pose, this time featuring openwork, has more distinct, classical Bes-like facial features, including large, prominent ears; a round beard; a pug nose; and two oblique wrinkles on the forehead. This piece is kept in the Fitzwilliam Museum (E.GA.5995.1943¹¹⁰) and its provenance is unknown. Distinguishing features include the small wig peeking out from under the round beard at both sides, the slightly rounded triangular face, and the dynamic pose. It can also be suspended by a ring bead soldered on top of the head. Another one (E.GA.5696.1943), which has a dark blue, glossy glaze, shows the other end of the dynamic arm movement, with the right hand reaching out.

108 New York, Metropolitan Museum 11.215.215 (faience; 19.5cm, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search?q=11.215.215>); 11.215.217 (glass and faience; 36.5cm) and 11.215.450 (menat necklace; bronze, with agate, carnelian, lapis lazuli, turquoise, glass, and faience; counterpoise 14.7cm, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/544509>). From Malkata, Birket Habu Mound B 1, House B, in bag, New York, Metropolitan Museum's excavations, 1910–11.

109 See the Metropolitan Museum's online catalogue: <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/548613>. For the origin, and the fourth menat-necklace now in Cairo, see WINLOCK 1912, 187, fig. 4.

110 Bosse-Griffiths 1977, 98-106, pl. XV. Manchester, Fitzwilliam Museum E.GA.5995.1943 – also E.GA.5696.1943. I thank the study picture to Helen Strudwick.



Figure 12b. Necklace from Malkata found together with another necklace and two menat-necklaces in a bag in a house. Ornamental and naturalistic Bes figures are strung on the same jewellery, probably being an older heirloom, supplemented by up-to-date pendant-figures.

© Metropolitan Museum, 11.215.217.

BES WITH FACE IN PROFILE

Fig12c. Dancing Bes from Amarna. © Ashmolean Museum, 1921.1148

The same dancing pose can also be seen on some Amarna amulets, with the head turned to the right. Two such amulets were excavated in houses N49¹¹¹ and N49.18¹¹² in the Main City, and probably one in the North Suburb¹¹³ too. The dancing Bes has a large belly and is holding his tail with his right hand while raising his left hand in front of his chest. Instead of a mane, he wears a headdress adorned with locks of hair that hang down to his shoulders, a style typical of the time of Amenhotep III, which survived apparently in the Amarna art. His head faces forward and appears to be hidden behind a bearded mask. Although the figure is nude, it appears to wear a usekh collar. There is a bead for suspension on top of the head. The colour is the vivid New Kingdom turquoise blue typical of the period.

A special case is the Petrie Museum's LDUCE-UC52826¹¹⁴. Although the dancing position is less dynamic, the figure is turned to the right. The right hand grabs the root of the tail, which curves above the baseline, while the left hand rests on a deformed *s3*-shaped sign. The oversized head is similar to the standard one in this group, with free-hanging hair and a round beard. The only animal feature evident is the tail; the lion's mane is absent, as was sometimes the case during the time of Amenhotep III. Compared to the previous series, the material's dull, light blue colour suggests a different workshop that worked with cheaper materials. The connection with the *s3*-sign was well-known during the Amarna period, at least towards the end, as evidenced by an exquisite alabaster unguent vessel¹¹⁵ depicting Bes in a different pose leaning on this sign in Tutankhamun's tomb.

111 CoA I, p. 22: N. 49.13. (1921.) – blue glazed amulet of Bes, pl. XIII, fig. 2, top, r., 21/217, given to the Ashmolean Museum (1921.1148, MOOREY 2000, 21, pl. III. row 2, middle)

112 For House N49.18, excavated by Kemp see KEMP – STEVENS 2010, 506, no. 36348.

113 CoA II, pl. XXIX, 1/14. This might be the same which is now in Swansea, The Egypt Centre, with inv. no. W1156, or a very similar amulet manufactured by this type of mould.

114 London, Petrie Museum LDUCE-UC52826, PETRIE 1914, 41, pl. XXXIV, 189a. In the online catalogue "headdress broken off along line of lateral perforation and missing" is written, but I do not think the figure had any headdress, much more a suspension loop was there.

115 Carter no. 579, <http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/gri/carter/579.html>

LITHE BESIT WITH FACE IN PROFILE

Figure 12d. Dancing Besit - central piece of the necklace figure 12e. © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston 45.965.

A few openwork amulets form a separate group among the dancing Bes figures. They are depicted in profile facing to the right, with their right hands grasping their tails and their left arms held in front of their torsos. Due to their extremely slender physique, they have a distinctive appearance and deserve a separate discussion. Even within this group, there are clear differences in how this physical property manifests itself.

Compared to the other figures in the dancing group, this one has a smaller wig and a rounder, more triangular face, which gives the whole composition a dynamic feel. Kate Boss-Griffith¹¹⁶ identified this figure as female based on its slim body and long, free-hanging hair. She also noticed the female features of the face and pendulous breast. She collected three pieces: a mould in the Fitzwilliam Museum¹¹⁷, and two pieces in the Wellcome Collection: Swansea W11 and the central piece of the 'Besit collar' in Swansea W9. The place of use or manufacture is unknown, as neither piece has a known origin. However, the time period is clearly the era of Amenhotep III – Akhenaten. With the help of Helen Strudwick, we can add two more pieces¹¹⁸ to the group. The tail of the latter piece is broken and missing. These pieces clearly demonstrate that they are more than just a slender variation of the basic dancing Bes figure. Here, the head is adorned with human hair rather than a mane. An analogy can also be found in Luzern¹¹⁹.

Similar iconography to that of the Beset figure has also been attested, with a change in the movement of the left arm. An amulet in Boston (MFA 45.965¹²⁰) is parallel to the W9 in Swansea. Here the figure steps forward, grabs the tail but rests the other hand on a vertical object that appears to be a conical pillar. The profile head has a long beard and hair that hangs freely. The provenance is not recorded.

116 BOSSE-GRIFFITHS 1977, 99-102, pl. XV. (98-106)

117 Manchester, Fitzwilliam Museum E.GA.3637.1943.

118 Manchester, Fitzwilliam Museum E.GA 1362,1947 and E.GA.5905.1943.

119 MÜLLER 1964, 91, no. 132a, fig. on p. 167: faience, H: 2,8 cm.

120 Boston, Museum of Fine Arts inv. no. 445.965, M: 2.2 x 1.9 cm, faience, acquired in Egypt by Goddard Du Bois (b. 1869 – d. 1925) and Josephine Cook Du Bois (b. 1864 – d. 1961). <https://collections.mfa.org/objects/148261/string-of-beads-broadcollar-elements-and-bes-amulet?ctx=ec17ece3-daa4-4452-bee8-0295fda1c590&idx=154>



Figure 12e. Floral necklace with Besit © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 45.965

This iconography was rarely produced among amulets. Though the differences between the pieces suggest the use of different moulds, the compositions originated from the same pattern, and they were made perhaps in the same workshop.

B. DANCING BES PLAYING TAMBOURINE

Most of the dancing Bes figures play the tambourine. As before, he dances along a baseline, moving his legs in steps to the right. He is naked, with a long tail behind him. His left arm is hidden behind the tambourine¹²¹, which he plays with his right hand. He has a beard and his face is surrounded by a headdress that resembles a mane. This group first appears in Malkata, after which it becomes widespread in Amarna.

BASIC DANCING BES WITH TAMBOURINE, MINIATURE (P288 / A11)

A large number of dancing Bes figures are miniature tambourine players made of faience.¹²² They are typically between 1,2 and 1,8 cm in height,

121 This round object was identified by Petrie first as a cymbal, later as a tambourine, and recent research calls it also so. Based on its ratio to the body this latter identification seems to be appropriate indeed.

122 PETRIE 1914, no. 288; CoA II, 116, no. A.10 (note that Pendlebury's line drawing was taken from Petrie Museum. no. UC52827, which is Petrie's no. 189b).

moulded, and copiously glazed in various colours. This is why their bodily features are poorly defined. One or two ring beads were soldered on for suspension. The iconographic group is represented as number 288 in Petrie's Amarna publication and as A10 in Pendlebury's Amarna corpus¹²³.



They were often strung together in large quantities, either with these pieces alone¹²⁴ or with other frontal and profiled Bes amulets (Petrie nos. 288, 290-291)¹²⁵ or other small amulets¹²⁶. However, sometimes this amulet was the central piece on a necklace.¹²⁷

The earliest dated examples were excavated by the Metropolitan Museum of Art expedition of 1910-11 in Amenhotep III's jubilee town at Malkata.¹²⁸ Beyond the royal context, the same group of amulets was found in the southern village during the subsequent 1911-12 campaign, and one of these amulets was still on a linen string with ten beads.¹²⁹

Figure 13a. Bes with tambourine from the Palace of Amenhotep III. in Malkata.
© Metropolitan Museum, 11.215.189.

123 CoA II. p. 116. The drawing of the amulet chosen to present it was modelled on LDUCE-UC52827. It is also PETRIE 1914, no. 189b.

124 BOYCE 1995; for an example in Amarna, north Suburb, house T35.3, NW, see CoA II. 40-41, 81, no. 29/325, pl. XXVIII,7: distributed to Wellington, New Zealand.

125 Such as the necklace in Amarna House T.35.3 (CoA II, 1933, 40-41 and 81, no. 29/325, pl. 28, fig. 7.)

126 Petrie Museum, inv. no. LDUCE-UC46998 (30 amulets and 61 beads; various shades of green, turquoise and blue faience); PETRIE 1894, pl. 17, no. 288; CoA II, pl. 50.

127 See e.g. in Malkata South village, New York, Metropolitan Museum, inv. no. 11.215.195 (<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/560828>)

128 E.g. New York, Metropolitan Museum, inv. nos. 11.215.215, 11.215.180, 11.215.182, 11.215.186, 11.215.187, 11.215.189, 11.215.190, 11.215.191, 11.215.194 (various shades of green, turquoise or blue faience; ca. 12-18 mm; unpublished). From the palace of Amenhotep III, such as e.g. 11.215.189 or (<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/551510>), 11.215.187 (<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/551498>) and also from the South village, such as e.g. 11.215.191 (<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/551512>).

<https://www.metmuseum.org/blogs/now-at-the-met/2015/Malkata-excavation> states that it was a jubilee city for Amenhotep III, used *only for his sed festivals*.

129 New York, Metropolitan Museum, inv. nos. 11.215.191 and 11.215.194 (shades of blue-green faience; ca. 1,5 cm; unpublished). The exact dating of these examples hinges on the assumption that Malkata was completely abandoned after Amenhotep III's jubilee festivals during the Amarna

During the Amarna period, they were strung on necklaces in large quantities. Most of the Bes amulets and their moulds considered for this study have indeed been excavated in and around Amarna.¹³⁰ In Akhenaten's city, these amulets were found primarily in the elite quarters, particularly in the northern suburb, where they were found in 76 houses.¹³¹ As with other faience objects, they appear to be scarce among the lowest population strata (in the Stone Village¹³² and possibly in the Workman Village¹³³), where faience factories have also been identified. It seems that they were mass-produced for the local elite. Hundreds came from Petrie's factory site, which was probably state-controlled.¹³⁴ Additionally, a necklace containing these types of pendant was among the finds in Akhenaten's tomb (TA26), which was discovered around 1882.¹³⁵ As a similar piece was 'picked up' on 11 March 1911 in the royal tomb without the suspension bead, it is possible that the amulet was originally attached to the pharaoh's mummy.¹³⁶ A ring belonging to Tutankhamun¹³⁷ depicts the god Bes in a similar dancing position, suggesting that the amulet was used not only during the Amarna period but probably later too among the elite.

This is also the most frequently documented Bes figure from the Amarna period in excavation reports. Often unearthed far and wide without further context, they have been found everywhere from the Hathor temple at Serabit el-Khadim in the Sinai¹³⁸ to Nubian fortresses such as Mirgissa¹³⁹

period, by both the royal court and the general population. Hopefully, new excavations will clarify this.

130 From Amarna, without further context: Amsterdam, Allard Pierson Museum, inv. nos. 140, 165, 168, 502, 3724-3725, and 4040 (terracotta moulds and faience amulets); Philadelphia, Penn Museum, inv. no. E764 (terracotta mould, H: 2,54 cm) and E790 (green-blue faience, H: 1,27 cm).

131 See the article of the author about Bes in Amarna, in print.

132 KEMP 2007, 10.

133 CoA I, p. 68: Main street, Opposite No.7: Bes amulet, A.9. (But it is said to be P297, see CoA II, p. 116, according to PETRIE 1894, pl. XVII it is a Taweret figure, thus it is probably misspelling instead of 287.)

134 VANTHUYNE 2012, 395-429.

135 MARTIN 1974, 79-80, pl. 50, no. 289, now in Edinburgh Royal Scottish Museum: A.1883.49.16 = ALDRED 1968, pl. 19, cf. p. 243; ROMANO 1989, Catalogue p. 217, no. 69A (<https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/collection-search-results/string-of-beads/302035>)

136 OGDON 1981, 178-9 + pl. XXII, 1-2, also DÍAZ online <http://www.egiptologia.com/arqueologia/bes/bes.htm>

137 REEVES 1990, 150.

138 London, Petrie Museum, inv. no. LDUCE-UC35372 (bright turquoise faience; ca. 1cm).

139 Although here it is in degraded form (VERCOUTTER 1970, 341, nos. 21-26).

and Sesebi¹⁴⁰. Elsewhere, they have been unearthed at sites including Saft el-Hinna¹⁴¹ and Giza¹⁴². This figure was used or reused during the reign of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu,¹⁴³ where amulets and moulds were found. It also frequently appears in museum catalogues without further information.

BASIC LARGE DANCING BES WITH TAMBOURINE

The large Bes amulet, which depicts the god dancing and playing the tambourine, is larger than the miniature versions, measuring between 2 and 7 cm on average.¹⁴⁴ The figure's legs appear to be anatomically proportionate. They depict Bes in a similar way, with his head in profile, and with only slight variations in bodily movement compared to the small versions. However, these larger pieces are much rarer, suggesting that they were used as focal points on necklaces. While all variants have been found in Amarna, they also appear elsewhere. The discovery¹⁴⁵ of a single piece in the rubbish dump of the Great Aton temple suggests that state officials in the service of Aton may have worn a Bes amulet in this form.

Basic Bes variation 1 (P287 / A13)



Petrie numbered it 287 in his publication on Amarna, and Pendlebury numbered it A13 in the second volume of his excavation report. Evidence for the figure has been found in the Main City and the North Suburb in Amarna,¹⁴⁶ and it was also present in Buhen¹⁴⁷ in Nubia. Although it follows the same iconography as the miniature figures, it is more elaborate. As with the tiny ones, the position of both the instrument and the head may vary

Figure 13b. Bes with tambourine from Amarna.
© Petrie Museum LDUCE-UC1138.

140 Louvre inv. no. E15673; given to the Museum in 1938 by the EES.

141 PETRIE 1906, 45: In Saft el Henna/Goshen, Petrie found many amulets, and "The commonest were the glaze figures of Bes and Bast, found mostly in children's graves" From the New Kingdom period he only gives this tiny dancing type in the pictures as no. 4 in plate XXXVIII. The tomb number is marked as 56, but there is no mention about this burial among the selected graves. 17 pieces are drawn, being the only amulet type documented there.

142 PETRIE 1906, 45, pl. 38, no. 4 (tomb 56); JUNKER 1929, 209 = PM 3497 (Mastaba X, LG 53); Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, inv. no. 26.1.809.

143 E.g. Chicago, Oriental Institute Museum inv. no. E15105A for figure and E15363 for mould.

144 E.g. New York, Metropolitan Museum inv. nos. 11.215.681-682 (terracotta; 4,8 cm); Philadelphia, Penn Museum, inv. no. E678a (terracotta; 5,08 cm); Romano 1980, 46, fig. 10.

145 CoA III, 13, no. 86.

146 For details see my Bes study on Amarna amulets in press.

147 E.g. Buhen: RANDALL-MACLVER – WOOLLEY 1911, 221, tomb H21, pl. 55, no. 10205.

slightly.¹⁴⁸ Bes has a lion's mane and beard, and his feline ears protrude backwards. A ring bead is usually attached to the top of his head to act as a suspension loop. He holds a tambourine in front of him with his left hand and beats it with his right. Below his arched back, his long tail flows sinuously from his rump to the baseline. It comes in various hues of yellow, green, turquoise, blue and tricolour.¹⁴⁹

BASIC BES VARIATION 2: FACE FRONTAL (P286 / A12)

This other variation is known as either P286 or A12, depending on whether Petrie or Pendlebury is the author, or their followers. The upper body is exactly the same here as at the previous variations, but the legs are much more bent, giving a more dynamic appearance to the composition. Petrie only mentions one piece (LDUCE-UC2022), whereas Pendlebury classifies two amulets in this group: one from the Main City and the other from the North suburb,¹⁵⁰ for which there are no pictures.



The Louvre (32435¹⁵¹) has a white variation where the tail almost melts into the background, but the thigh is highlighted with black dots. The most significant difference in iconography is the head, which is depicted in a frontal view. Details on the head are painted in black, such as the eyes and the frown on the forehead, or the circle and middle dot on the tambourine. The legs are also dotted. A similar Bes with dots on the legs and on the tambourine was also found in Amarna by Flinders Petrie. The lion's mane is only almost unconsciously indicated below the round ears.

Figure 13c. Bes with tambourine. © Louvre 32435.
See also in EMERIT ET ALII 2017, 270, ill. Cat. 247.

148 PETRIE 1914, no. 287; CoA II, no. A13; cf. London, Petrie Museum inv. no. LDUCE-UC1138 (medium turquoise; 2,0 cm; leg missing).

149 For the different colours see e.g., in London, Petrie Museum inv. nos. LDUCE-UC1140 (bright blue faience), LDUCE-UC1141 (white, and blue-purple faience with spots of red glaze), LDUCE-UC1142 (yellow faience), LDUCE-UC1143 (grey-blue faience), LDUCE-UC23685 (dark blue faience).

150 CoA I., 18 (MC House L.51.1); CoA II, 55 (NS house T.36.47, 7SW).

151 Louvre 32435, faience, H: 7,3 cm, see EMERIT ET ALII 2017, 270, ill. no. 247. The shape of this Bes figure fits perfectly into the 18th Dynasty Bes amulets, the way of its decoration with the black dots and facial features point, however, to the Third Intermediate Period, see BULTÉ 1991, especially pl. 9, no. 9a-b. Thanks for drawing my attention to it by Virginia Webb.

BASIC BES VARIATION 3: LOOKING BACKWARD WITH TAIL GRASPED IN HAND



Figure 13d. Bes with tambourine from Akhmim. © British Museum EA16214.

He turns his head backwards, holding the tail in his right hand while his left arm holds the tambourine. His head is adorned with a beard, mane and lion's ears, and a wide suspension loop with four grooves sits at the top. This creates the impression that he is wearing a narrow headdress. Similar openwork amulets can be found in Berlin, Birmingham,¹⁵² Warsaw¹⁵³ and Tübingen,¹⁵⁴ although none of them has a provenance. One in the British Museum is said to come from Akhmim.¹⁵⁵ There is also an exquisite, glossy, glazed, blue-and-green figure in the Hermitage.¹⁵⁶ This figure is depicted on clay moulds from the 1910–11 Malkata excavations at the Palace of Amenhotep III¹⁵⁷ and the Amarna factory site.¹⁵⁸ The setting appears to be influenced by the same source as that of the chairs of Sitamen in KV46, where a dancing Bes with a tambourine — albeit in a different pose —

152 Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, 1969W4064, unprovenienced, faience inlay, 7 cm. Ex Wellcome collection (Bes: Development of a Deity, online exhibition: <https://more.bham.ac.uk/birminghamegyptology/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2013/10/Complete-Exhibition-Catalogue.pdf>)

153 Warsaw National Museum, inv. no. 142697 MNW, without provenience, H: 6,7 cm. (<https://cyfrowe.mnw.art.pl/pl/zbiory/478860>) and inv. no. 142911 MNW, H: 4,6 cm (<https://cyfrowe.mnw.art.pl/pl/zbiory/478861>).

154 Tübingen, without inv. no., faience, see ZIBELIUS-CHEN 2002, 78, links. This could e.g. inspire the Padova amulet, see inv. no. XVII-134 -9, H: 9 cm; SILIOTTI 1987, 112, no. 18; CAMBINO 2012, 49, fig. 40 – Based on this picture, it seems to be a modern creation.

155 London, British Museum EA16214 said to come from Akhmim, faience, H: 4,48 cm. Donated by Walter Myers in 1886. See ANDREWS 1994, 40, fig. 37c.

156 Saint Petersburg, Hermitage, inv. no. 450, Golenischeff collection, <https://www.globalegyptianmuseum.org/record.aspx?id=13446>

157 See the online catalogue of the Metropolitan Museum, New York: 11.215.681: "Mold for an Amulet of Bes with a Tambourine, clay, 4,8 cm. Malkata, various Metropolitan Museum excavations, probably 1910–11. Other identical one 11.215.682." "Museum excavations, 1910-11. Acquired by the Museum in the Division of Finds, 1911." H: 6,1 cm. The other, 11.215.682 was found in the Palace of Amenhotep III, in 1910-11 season. Clay, measurements not given. See also HAYES 1959, 252; ROMANO 1980, 46, fig. 10.

158 Pennsylvania, Penn Museum E678A – H: 5,08 cm, clay, Amarna factory site, 1893, see WEGNER – WEGNER – SILVERMAN 2006, 40, fig. 34.

also looks backwards.¹⁵⁹ This design originated in a community close to the court of Amenhotep III and was later produced in Amarna.¹⁶⁰

CORPULENT BES WITH HEAD IN FRONTAL VIEW



A special case among these amulets is a Manchester piece (5544). Unlike the other dancing Bes figures playing the tambourine, this one depicts a large-bellied, corpulent figure with a round face, large ears, and a tongue protruding from a full mouth. He wears a ridged headdress, a short goatee beard, and a pleated strip of ribbon hangs down between his dancing legs. The large amulet is not pierced, though it has a hole in the bottom.¹⁶¹

Figure 13e. Bes with tambourine. © Manchester Museum 5544

C. DANCING BES PLAYING DOUBLE FLUTE



An image of Bes playing the double flute is present in some museum collections and was also found in Amarna during Pendlebury's excavations.¹⁶² The dark blue amulet, now in the Petrie Museum (LDCU-UC1114), shows the god dancing to the right while holding the double flute's stems with both hands. Below his pot belly, a two-pleated strip of ribbon seems to hang down. His tail appears to curl inwards above the baseline. The amulet is blurry due to the surplus glaze used to colour it, making it impossible to distinguish any details of the face. The light discolouration at the top is due to the soldering of one or two beads, which are now missing.

Figure 14a. Bes with double flute from Amarna.
© Petrie Museum, LDCU-UC1114

159 DAVIES 1907, 40. fig. 3, right side panel of the armchair of Sit-Amun.

160 There is a 19th century interpretation of this variation in the Allard Pierson Museum, Amsterdam, inv. no. 358, made of terracotta, H: 7,5 cm. SCHEURLEER 1909 nr. 371, said to originate from Crete.

161 Manchester Museum inv. no. 5544, H: 5,3 cm, faience, no provenience is given. The hole was planned from bottom to top, but made less than 1 cm deep, thus it was not pierced at all, probably it was a finial. Thanks Campbell Price for the information and picture. I still could not find any parallel to it.

162 CoA III. pl. CVIII, it is now in the Petrie Museum, London probably inv. no. LDCU-UC1114, 2 cm high, faience.

This iconography again can be seen on an example in the Louvre (AF545)¹⁶³. It has the same type of glaze and two ring beads for suspension. Also another example can be found in the Louvre (N4233),¹⁶⁴ where the profile face is visible thanks to the lesser amount of glaze. Typical features include a prominent nose and eyebrows, bulging cheek and long lion-mane also covering the shoulders at the back. A similar amulet of the same shade of blue can also be seen here (also N4233); however, the left stem of the instrument appears in this composition much wider, with a narrower stem beside it. In this case, the face is in semi-profile, so both eyes are visible, surrounded by the lion's mane. There are also two suspension beads.

The same flute-playing Bes with head in profile can be found in the Ashmolean Museum exhibition in Oxford, as well as in a different variation in the online catalogue of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (see below). However, these amulets are made of matte faience rather than glossy faience, suggesting the use of different technologies. Thanks to the material, the facial features and mane of both amulets are more accentuated. The two arms and round beard are clearly visible, as are the dancing legs, long tail and strip of ribbon hanging down from the waist. These details also explain the obscure embossments of the glossy pieces in the Petrie Museum and the Louvre. The above mentioned unprovenanced Boston piece (72.2701¹⁶⁵) faces in the opposite direction (i.e. left), with the right leg moved further forward. The idea behind them was the same: they mirror each other iconographically.

Also a mould for producing the composition can be found in the Fitzwilliam Museum (E.GA.3601.1943¹⁶⁶), where the figure wears a feathered crown.

D. DANCING BES PLAYING HARP

The harpist Bes appears to be a one-of-a-kind piece (AF12864)¹⁶⁷ in the Louvre's ancient Egyptian collection. He wears a kilt, and his body is adorned with ornamental details. His face is in profile and has Bes-like features. He also

163 AF545, blue faience, H: 2,38 cm.

164 N4233, faience, H: 2,3 cm, in the collection from 1857(?). <https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010012353>. The collection also has a Bes playing the double flute in totally frontal representation, where the backside is also worked out. Several objects have the same number, e.g. <https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010023746>

165 Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 72.2701, H: 2,5 cm, Hay Collection. <https://collections.mfa.org/objects/136895/amulet-of-bes?ctx=c852f5ce-1691-4c4e-8a18-7dbe6f8ba767&idx=149>

166 Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, height not given, <https://data.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/id/object/58030>

167 Louvre, inv. no. AF12864: faience, H: 3,8 cm. ancient fonds. online: <https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010013160>. EMERIT ET ALII 2017, 270, ill. Cat. 246.

has a tripartite wig with a mane-like design. The large harp stands upright. It appears that he is playing it with a plectrum in his right hand while adopting a dancing pose. The protuberance on top of his head is the suspension loop.

The piece's origin is unknown, as it is from the 'ancients fonds'. This Bes differs greatly from the Amarna-type Bes figures. The direction of the figure, the position of his body, how he is dressed, and how the cloth is draped are reminiscent of Bes representations on chairs found in KV46, the tomb of Yuya and Tuya.¹⁶⁸ Therefore, it seems to have originated in the pre-Amarna royal court.



Figure 15. Bes with harp. © Louvre AF12864. See also in EMERIT ET ALII 2017, 270, ill. Cat. 246.

CONCLUSIONS

The use of Bes amulets varied considerably during the 18th Dynasty. While they clearly evolved from traditional human amulets, the numerous variations suggest multiple interpretations, layers of meaning, and purposes. Their presence in both habitation areas and cemeteries suggests that they were used in relation to both life and death. They were also found in sanctuaries. Ex-votos could explain their presence, but they certainly had a liturgical function too. For example, an amulet depicting a double flute-playing Bes beside a seated goddess and a dancing monkey, which is preserved in the Fitzwilliam Museum,¹⁶⁹ presents this function.

Two distinct phases can be identified in their evolution. A change in visual taste became apparent around the time of the Pre-Amarna period, during the reign of Amenhotep III or even earlier. The next phase is the Amarna period, when mass production became apparent. Relatively few amulet statuettes were made during this period, which became the most popular in later dynasties. The majority were naturalistic plaque amulets. However, the manufacture or use of earlier compositions as hereditary jewellery continued during the reigns of Ramesses II and III, albeit in gradually decreasing quantities.

The vast majority of these Bes amulets originate from inhabited areas dating back to the Pre-Amarna and Amarna periods. The towns of Malkata and

168 DAVIS 1907; QUIBELL 1908.

169 Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum inv. no. E.328.1932, H: 3,8 cm, without provenience.

Amarna began producing these amulets during the reigns of Amenhotep III and Akhenaten, respectively. However, the earliest naturalistic specimens may have originated in Gurob, meaning that the period beginning with Thutmose III should also be considered as a starting point. Evidence of their popularity throughout Egypt and at different social levels has also been found.

Their rapid spread, in addition to religious beliefs and attitudes to life in general, is due to economic and technical factors. The initial faience amulets in the series were manufactured using moulds taken from original items modelled by sculptors. Later, any existing amulet could be used for this purpose, and practically no restrictions were placed on the quantity, time or geographical area of production. This explains how the same compositions could be distributed in different places at the same time. (The other, less common material was stone, also cut by sculptors who could work very precisely, even on a tiny scale, but in limited quantities. Occasionally golden amulet-pendants are also known.)

During the Late 18th Dynasty, iconography provides usually a clear and unambiguous depiction of the god Bes. Aside from his tail, he is typically depicted wearing a lion mask, though smaller quantities of Pre-Amarna and earlier patterns still survive. The popularity of Bes amulets suggests that they were used by people at all levels of society, albeit seemingly in different quantities, qualities, and iconographic types. The locations in which naturalistic compositions were found seem to indicate a concentration around the royal court during the late 18th Dynasty, although the uneven distribution of excavated, published and studied sites respectively might be misleading.

The large number of amulets found among the everyday possessions of palace residents, elite members, and workmen in Amarna suggests their general importance; they were probably used to fulfil essential human needs throughout the life cycle. The Amarna religion not only tolerated these amulets, but also promoted them through special types, such as naturalistic profile and frontal figures. However, abandoning earlier traditional shapes reflects a new interpretation.

Breaking with traditional decorative iconography was a natural consequence of the Amarna conception of life and religion because of the ideological change. This process began much earlier, however, and I believe that artistic experimentation resulting from this new solar cult led to the new style and compositions. This trend became widespread among the elite during the reign of Amenhotep III. The workshops at the Malkata palace produced several new types of amulet, attesting to their significance in royal ideology. Interestingly, few examples of these novelties have been found in Gurob, despite its association with the elite and the theory that Queen Tyi spent her final years there.¹⁷⁰

170 For the establishments for the harem complex see KEMP 1978, and the Gurob Harem Palace

As amulets are religious objects, they could only have been made for ritual or cult purposes, and for talismanic purposes i.e. for protection, which may have evolved over time or varied between social groups. Bes amulets are most commonly found in children's graves and in the burials of women, regardless of their social or economic status. This suggests that, even in the earliest times, these amulets were primarily used for their protective properties, which is consistent with representations of Bes on toilet articles made for women. However, a kohl tube at University College London (Petrie Museum, LDUCE-UC30136) suggests that Bes protected the owner, a scribe named It, on a daily basis.¹⁷¹ Therefore, living adult men could also be his beneficiaries. The depiction on this kohl tube is also noteworthy from an iconographic point of view, as Bes is depicted standing frontally and is expressly named in the inscription beside the picture as 'Aha', a well-known small deity from earlier times who typically appears on apotropaic objects and helps women in childbirth. It is therefore highly plausible to consider him as 'a guardian for every day' (*m s3 r^c nb*), as the inscription states for other owners. However, the subsequent columns explain that the tube is intended to contain a remedy for an eye ailment in at least one of its cavities. Bes may therefore also have been involved in medical treatment. From an iconographic perspective, this depiction is notable because the 'Fighter' appears to be female, particularly in her facial features. This is similar to Bes figures from the Middle Kingdom and the so-called Besit amulets among the dancing amulets. The *s3* sign also appears here.

The new amulets were more decorative and their representation was unambiguous. By the end of the 18th Dynasty, their purpose had been firmly established, with Bes becoming associated with toiletries and equipment for the bedroom. The underlying theological concept also evolved and became more elaborate. The association of Bes with the solar eye became much more prominent, as evidenced by the numerous representations of dancing musicians, necessitating the creation of new iconographic types. Interaction between the various fields is evident here, too: artistic considerations, for instance, dictated profile displays. In two-dimensional frontal representations, movement cannot obviously be depicted, yet it seems to have been of great importance. It is most likely that their liturgical function demanded it. These figures which are mostly depicted playing the tambourine, are mainly made in the form of tiny plaque amulets, suggesting that they were used in large quantities. Due to their typical use in collars and Bes necklaces, they may have functioned as clothing decorations during rituals.

Project (<https://www.gurob.org.uk/about.php>)

171 FREED 1982, 223-224, no. 281.

OVERVIEW AND REMARKS

The choice of Bes amulets changed significantly during the late 18th Dynasty. A notable development during this period was the creation of naturalistic amulets depicting Bes in either a frontal or profile view. While they all follow the same basic design, the size and level of detail of the figure can vary considerably.

The frontal setting is traditional and was produced alongside three-dimensional Bes statuettes. Cairo JE 57246,¹⁷² which was found in Amarna, depicts the god in intricate detail from the back, but has a plain, unmodelled front.¹⁷³ This piece is clearly unfinished, with the front half missing by chance, yet it was manufactured in exactly the same way as many plain-backed Bes amulets. It was made using a mould, so it is strange that the moulds documented from the Amarna factories were only used for the front. Looking through the hundreds of Bes moulds, it is clear that the moulds for the back have been lost or were not considered important enough to be kept or published – moulds for the back might have escaped my attention most probably, however, they were not kept or published as they were considered uninteresting.

There are many possible iconographic types. As well as simple, common figures, several variations emerged. Both the figure itself and its accessories could be modified. These changes occurred in line with the trends of the given period. James F. Romano's analysis¹⁷⁴ of the New Kingdom, based on a collection of 120 archaeological objects and representations that could be dated stylistically or iconographically, helps us to understand this. However, the iconographic types of Bes amulets have not yet been the subject of specific research. It is reasonable to assume that they were also time-specific and varied, although much data is still missing. In this study, I have attempted to compile a preliminary typological collection.

By the middle of the 18th Dynasty, naturalistic figures appeared alongside ornamental Bes amulets as plaque amulets. Initially, the figure was that of a common human with bent legs, giving the impression of a dwarf,¹⁷⁵ a form that he would later take. The figures came in various sizes, including miniature ones. They most often appeared nude, but some wore strips of ribbon and/or kilts, which degraded over time to create a renewed iconographic variation: Bes with horizontal tights. The amulets were often as small as beads and were crudely or elaborately crafted on one side only. Occasionally, work was also done on the reverse, but the surfaces were kept almost plain. As

172 ASFD: Cairo Museum JE 57246, M: 3,1x1,6x0,5 cm

173 CoA II, pl. XLVI, 1/1.

174 ROMANO 1989, 58-122.

175 The same feature can be observed still during the Third Intermediate Period, for instance at the amulet no. 51.2564 in the Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest. Compare the frontal and the side views at <https://www.mfab.hu/artworks/12408/>.

before, they were strung together on a line with many small amulets, either in various shapes or all the same shape, to make a necklace, and occasionally they could be a central piece in a necklace. The god's stature changed according to the design of the trunk, ranging from slim to potbellied, and from slender to corpulent.

The bow-legged group evolved into filigree, developing new variations based partly on old ideas. The figure could be depicted not only alone, but also alongside two Taweret figures, recreating a composition from the time of Amenemhat III as seen on scarabs. Alternatively, wings could be added to the figure's body. This peculiar addition has a precursor/prototype in the court of Amenhotep III, as seen on a winged Bes with a feathered headdress on a panel of the bed found in the tomb of Tuyu and Yuya.¹⁷⁶ In this relief, he holds a basket filled with elite symbols: *ꜥnh*, *s3* and *w3s*, which sit on top of his hands. This composition, adjusted to fit anyone, featuring the protective wedjat eye, is well-known; the pattern also appeared on a painted pilgrim bottle, on which he holds the wedjat eye in both hands.¹⁷⁷ This was found in Gurob, in a house among burnt remains buried under the floor.¹⁷⁸ Brunton and Engelbach also excavated the same site, where they found a fragmentary winged Bes inlay cut from ivory.¹⁷⁹ In some cases, the crouching position was accentuated by spraying the legs outwards in a two-dimensional manner, as with the earlier akimbo pose. A special development from the New Kingdom seems to have emerged perhaps from this pose for Bes wearing a kilt. This iconography may have emerged from a combination of two trends: the desire to visualise humanised gods for ideological reasons, and a technical solution based on the aforementioned composition. For instance, when the thighs of small figures grew larger, they formed a triangular shape that could be interpreted as a kilt. The idea that Bes protected against snakes became associated with this kilted figure, inspiring depictions of a dwarf biting snakes. One trend was the so-called

176 DAVIS 1907, 37, pl. XXXVII; Quibell 1908, 51, pl. XXXI.

177 Oxford, Ashmolean Museum 1890.897. Petrie 1891, 17, pl. 17.

178 PETRIE 1891, 16-17, pl. 17, no. 9, belonging probably to Hent-taui-neb, a daughter of Amenhotep III. Now in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

179 BRUNTON – ENGELBACH 1927, pl. 28, no. 19, group 474. The inlay is now in Edinburg, National Museum of Scotland inv. no. A.1921.1490. Here the objects held by the raised hands are missing. The assemblage was found in a large tomb with several separate chambers. The objects found in the tomb are originating from different time. They were accumulated in the first chamber most probably by the tomb robbers. The earliest seems to be the sherd no. 11, mentioning "the house of Thotmes IV" – the latest the Mycenaean vessel: FURUMARK 1941, 410-415 – LH IIIB, that is ca. 1300-1200 BC, in Egypt the reign of Horemheb – 19th Dynasty; Latest ASHTON 1995 LH IIIA-to IIIB, thus post-Amarna period. It is now in the National Museum of Scotland, inv. no. A.1921.1490.

Pataikos statuettes, while the other was a short series of kilted Bes plaque amulets. First, the kilt disappeared, and then the series itself. The iconographic concept was inspired by an ancient representation in which Aha holds a snake in both hands. This can also be connected to the court of Amenhotep III.

The naturalistic trend in the domino group, when combined with the same trend in the bow-legged group, appears to have given rise to a humanised form. This led to genuine, naturalistic, frontal Bes without a beard amulet composition. A notable feature of these compositions is the addition of a ribbon, potentially representing a reinterpretation of the band between the legs of the domino group and the tail of the bow-legged group. Meanwhile, a strong parallel trend has straightened the animalistic nature of the god, transforming the frontal, Bes without a beard into a classical leonine Bes figure. This figure already resembles the later classical shape, albeit in plaque form. This composition appears to have become the most popular, at least from the Amarna period onwards.

A completely new approach was to depict the god in profile. Considering the activities of these figures, such as dancing and playing instruments like the tambourine, double flute and harp, it is clear that a two-dimensional frontal representation could not unequivocally express basic movements. Therefore, it was necessary to adjust the god's pose to clearly demonstrate his dancing movements.

Unfortunately, the provenance of many of the key figures is unknown and they cannot be dated archaeologically. However, based on their style and iconography, which are similar to those of the Amarna period, they can be dated to around that time. The style of these figures follows the same tendencies as that of other objects representing Bes analysed by Romano, enabling the pre-Amarna style (i.e. the reign of Amenhotep III) and the Amarna style (i.e. the period from Akhenaten to Smenkhkare) to be discerned. Another example of a Bes in the same dancing position is carved into a ring belonging to Tutankhamun,¹⁸⁰ indicating that this composition was used until at least the beginning of the post-Amarna period. The unique harp player has a distinct style that points to the pre-Amarna period. In the absence of any other pieces, this must have been a dead end. However, it remains unclear for how long the double flute player pieces were manufactured. The lack of context, except for the Malkata and Tell el-Amarna amulets, which provide a geographical and temporal framework, causes uncertainty. In the case of the tambourine players, the moulds at Medinet Habu demonstrate that the pieces were in use, or reused, at that time thanks to the production process.



The overlap between the tambourine player and the only dancing representation involving the holding of the tail, as well as the extension of this

180 REEVES 1990, 150.

theme with a *ss*-sign, suggests a shared iconographic origin. Examining the E panel, which depicts the footwear found in the tomb of Tuyu and Yuya, where Bes rests his hand on a *ss*-sign beside another Bes playing the tambourine,¹⁸¹ suggests that this idea likely originated from the same source. The concept of Bes amulets depicting a flutist may also have come from this source, as may the later painting on a vessel in Deir el-Medineh, tomb 1348¹⁸².

A comparison of the distribution of in-profile and frontal plaque amulets reveals that both compositions are prevalent. However, the imbalance in the quantity of in-profile moulds is striking when comparing the number of moulds. This may be due to the manner in which they are used. In-front miniature amulets appear to be more popular as individual pendants on necklaces, whereas profile ones seem to be preferred on their own or combined with other amulets.¹⁸³ Thus, demand for the in-profile amulets may have been higher.

TYPOLICAL TABLE

I. FRONTAL STANDING BES			
A. Simple Bes – basic	faience, -	Gurob London, Petrie Museum LDUCE- UC51557	
– condensed	faience, 1,2 cm	Megiddo Chicago, Oriental Institute Museum OIM15936	

181 DAVIS 1907, p. 37, pl. XXXVII; QUIBELL 1908, 51, pl. XXXI.








182 BRUYERE 1939, 113, fig. 49.

183 See e.g. in Dublin, National Museum of Ireland TA289B, where the two tiny Bes types, frontal standard and in profile tambourine player are together with one larger frontal standard amulet, from Amarna.

<p>– double sided</p>	<p>carnelian, 2,2 cm</p>	<p>– Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 72.872</p>	
<p>B. Filigree Bes – basic</p>	<p>faience, 2,4 cm.</p>	<p>Deir el-Ballas New York, Metropolitan Museum of Arts, 17.6.130</p>	
<p>– special, e.g.</p>	<p>faience, 3 cm</p>	<p>– Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 37.914E</p>	
<p>– flanked by two Tawerets</p>	<p>faience, 1,9 cm</p>	<p>– Chicago Art Institute, 1894.908</p>	
<p>– winged</p>	<p>faience,</p>	<p>Armant Manchester 10731a</p>	
<p>with ribbon</p>	<p>faience</p>	<p>possibly from Abydos Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 3.1774</p>	

TOWARD THE CLASSICAL BES AMULETS

– wearing a kilt	faience, 3,5 cm	Semna, tomb 563 Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 27.903a	
– flattened	faience, 3,8 cm	– Budapest, Museum of Fine Arts, 51.1709	
C. Classical – miniature	faience, 1,3 cm	Amarna London, Petrie Museum LDUCE-UC23686	
– larger	faience, 2,85 cm	Amarna London, Petrie Museum, LDUCE-UC1135	
II. Dancing Bes in profile			
A. without instrument –face in profile – face frontal – Lithe Besit	faience, faience, 2,2 cm	Amarna, House 49.13 Oxford, Ashmolean Museum 1921.1148 – Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 45.965	

B. playing tambourine – miniature	faience, 1,2 cm	Malkata, Palace of Amenhotep III New York, Metropolitan Museum, 11.215.189	
B. playing tambourine + larger, basic 1.	faience, 2 cm	Amarna London, Petrie Museum LDUCE-UC1138	
– basic 2, face frontal,	faience, 7,3 cm	– Paris, Louvre, 32435 (Emerit et alii 2017, 270, ill. no. 247.)	
– basic 3, looking back	faience, 4,48 cm	Akhmim London, British Museum EA16214	
– corpulent	faience, 5,3 cm	– Manchester, 5544	
C. playing double flute	faience, 2,5 cm	– London, Petrie Museum LDUCE-UC, 1114	
D. playing harp	faience, 3,8 cm	– Paris, Louvre AF12864 (Emerit et alii 2017, 270, ill. Cat. 246.)	

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- CHAPMAN ONLINE EXHIBITION = Sarah Chapman, online exhibition: *Bes: Development of a Deity* (<https://more.bham.ac.uk/birminghamegyptology/eton-myers-project/virtual-museum/bes-development-of-a-deity/>)
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ONLINE EGYPTIAN COLLECTIONS OF MUSEUMS:

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- Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery: <https://www.artsbma.org/nationality/egypt/>
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- Turin, Museo Egizio: <https://collezioni.museoegizio.it/>
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