

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 / MEPT 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 / MEBT + 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

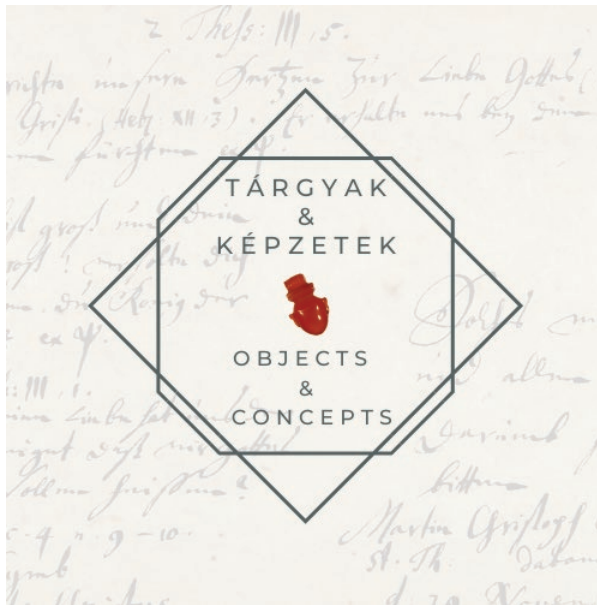
Andrea Fullér – Eszter Ferő: Tutanhamentől a szecesszióig: a Zsolnay gyár egyiptizáló díszműáruja [From Tutankhamun to Art Nouveau: the Zsolnay factory's Egyptionizing decorative goods]

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 JŰNOVA Macková, Adéla – STORCHOVÁ, Lucie - JŰN, 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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A Private Collector and an Amulet in the Semmelweis Museum for Medical History

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ABSTRACT

A recent research direction of the HNMPCC Semmelweis Museum for the Medical History (SOM) focuses on investigating the provenance of the objects in its Egyptian collection and the circumstances of their acquisition, as well as, through their study, gaining a deeper understanding of ancient Egyptian conceptions of health. The present paper concentrates on a djed-pillar amulet purchased from Rudolf Bedő, which entered the collection prior to the Museum's official foundation. We examined the life of the former owner, attempted to clarify the origin of the amulet, and reviewed current scholarly knowledge concerning the djed pillar. In addition, we sought to address the question of what health-related meanings – beyond its funerary associations – the emblem identified with the backbone of Osiris, the god of the dead, might have embodied in the eyes of the ancient Egyptians. The importance of this symbol is underscored by its prominent placement in the tomb of Tutankhamun, where a nearly half-metre-high example was installed among the shrines.

KEYWORDS: Rudolf Bedő, art collection, history of medicine, amulet, religion, death, survival, Semmelweis Museum

INTRODUCTION

The primary aim guiding the formation and expansion of the collection of the HNMPCC Semmelweis Museum for the History of Medicine (SOM) is to demonstrate how human societies relate to health and disease, and what forms of knowledge and tools they have developed in the field of healing. In keeping with its institutional mission, the Museum presents the evolution of these attitudes and bodies of expertise from a historical perspective, spanning from ancient Egyptian culture to the modern era. Although its Egyptian

collection comprises only a limited number of objects, it fits well within the Museum's scope. At present, the holdings include twelve amulets, several smaller objects, and Egyptian human remains. Research on the latter marked the starting point for the systematic study of the Egyptian material,¹ one of the first stages of which involves reconstructing the pathways by which these artefacts entered the Museum.

Since its foundation in 1965, the Semmelweis Museum has been committed to collecting, preserving, interpreting, and exhibiting material and intangible heritage related to the history of medicine. To this end, it actively seeks out relevant artefacts and, as resources allow, acquires them through purchase or exchange. A substantial portion of the collection's growth, however, has resulted from donations: numerous objects and works of outstanding significance entered the holdings as gifts from private individuals or institutions.² Egyptian artefacts have augmented the collection through all three acquisition routes. The most significant items, including mummy remains, were donated to the SOM in 1973. Two amulets, however, entered the collection earlier, in May 1964, shortly before the Museum's official opening.³ The scarab (inv. no. 67.843.1) and the djed-pillar amulet (inv. no. 67.844.1) were purchased from the renowned art writer and collector Rudolf Bedő.⁴

The present article focuses on the latter object. On the one hand, it is evident that the Museum's acquisition of Egyptian artefacts was motivated by considerations of medical history: the beginnings of academic medicine were traced back in Hungary to the Pharaonic period, prompting the institution to seek objects that could allude to these origins from a medical-historical perspective. The significance of Egypt in the history of medicine had already attracted the attention of Hungarian physicians in the 1920s, primarily through the research of Tibor Győry (1869–1938), who had intensively studied the development of international medical historiography since the turn of the century and regarded "Egyptian–Mesopotamian" physicians as its most ancient precursors.⁵ After the Second World War, Gyula Regöly-Mérei (1908–1974) – a board member of the Medical History Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, of the Hungarian Society for the History of Medicine, and of several international medical-historical societies, as well as a founding member of the International Palaeopathology Association, and from 1958 a lecturer in medical history at the Budapest University of Medical Sciences (today Semmelweis University) – explicitly identified ancient Egyptian medicine as the point of departure for

1 GYŐRY – SCHEFFER – SZVÁK 2022

2 ANTALL – BUZINKAY 1984.

3 SOM archive 3/1965

4 MNMKG Semmelweis Library archive, inv. no. 1151-1167.

5 KAPRONCZAY 2013, 4.

modern rational healing.⁶

On the other hand, the chemist-trained collector Rudolf Bedő – through his maternal kinship with Alfréd Politzer (1884–1941), who from 1905 served as a board member of the “Medical Historical Museum Committee” of the Royal Medical Association of Budapest – may have followed medical-historical research for an extended period and familiarised himself with its material remains. His name was likely well known within medical and medical-historical circles.

Bedő himself stated that, alongside his maternal uncle Ádám Politzer (1835–1920)⁷, it was his maternal grandfather, Illés Politzer (1826-1907), who awakened his interest in works of art.⁸ Like several other members of the Politzer family, Illés Politzer (1826-1907) was an exceptionally talented physician.⁹ The Jewish Politzer family, residing in Irsa (present-day Albertirsa) and raising many children, derived its livelihood from commercial activities. Despite everyday financial difficulties and material constraints, the parents placed great emphasis on their children’s education and encouraged all eleven of them to develop their abilities. After completing his secondary education, Illés Politzer was admitted to the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Vienna. At the outbreak of the Revolution and War of Independence of 1848–1849, he was among the first to join the Vienna Legion and served as a military physician in György Klapka’s unit. Following the suppression of the war, he was forced into hiding and subsequently practised medicine first in the districts of Cegléd and then in Kalocsa. He later moved to Pest, where he gained professional recognition and widespread renown as a surgeon.¹⁰ His surviving papers were preserved by his grandson Rudolf Bedő and donated in 1964 to the archival collection of the Museum for the History of Medicine. This donation further substantiates the existence of a lively and productive relationship between the

6 He wrote his articles in Hungarian. Here are the translation of the titles of his major works on Egyptology / Ancient Egyptian medicine: New Data on the Medical Concepts of the Ancient Egyptians Based on Palaeographic Studies (Orvosi Hetilap, 1957, no. 31). On the Funerary Cult of the Ancient Egyptians (Orvosi Hetilap, 1958, no. 24). Palaeopathological Investigations of Ancient Egyptian Mummies (with János Nemeskéri; Orvostudományi Közlemények, 1958). Rational-Empirical and Magical Therapeutic Elements in Ancient Egyptian Medicine (Orvostörténeti Közlemények, 1958). Ancient Egyptian Medicine as a Type in the Development of Archaic Healing Practices (Antik Tanulmányok, 1960). Palaeographic and Palaeopathological Data Concerning the Question of Smallpox in Ancient Egypt and China (Orvosi Hetilap, 1966, no. 15). Ancient Egyptian Medical Terminology (Orvostörténeti Közlemények, 1976).

7 LAMPÉ-TÓTH 1986.

8 BERSÉNYI 1973, 26.

9 BROENNIMAN 2023.

10 SZÁLLÁSI 1979.

Museum and the collector, and indicates that the distinguished collector closely followed the development of the then-emerging medical history museum, and helped it – among other things – also with Egyptian amulets.

THE LIFE AND ART COLLECTION OF RUDOLF BEDŐ

The name of Rudolf Bedő (31 May 1891 – 18 February 1978, figure 1) is well known in Hungarian artistic circles, primarily owing to his activities as an art collector and art historian. Born in Budapest in 1891, he attended the József Technical University and the Budapest Academy of Commerce. After he completed his education in the city he continued his studies in Vienna and Paris.¹¹ His father, Béla Bedő (Bettelheim),¹² a commercial councillor and factory director, was one of the owners of the Phönix Sulphuric Acid and Chemical Products Factory in Nagybánya (nationalised in 1942 as Hungaria Chemical and Metallurgical Works) and, like his maternal uncle Ádám Politzer (1835–1920), a distinguished otolaryngologist and professor of medicine living in Vienna, was himself an art enthusiast with a significant collection.¹³ Growing up in this family environment, Rudolf Bedő absorbed an interest in the arts from an early age.

Bedő began his career at his father's factory, which brought him to Nagybánya, where in addition to his industrial work he attended János Thorma's painters' school.¹⁴ His artistic sensibility is also reflected in the photographs he took in Nagybánya during this period.¹⁵ He was not spared the hardships of the First World War: while serving with the 8th Honvéd Hussar Regiment on the Russian front, he spent two years as a prisoner of war and, as a result of a wound, lost part of one leg. He was discharged with the rank of first lieutenant, having been promoted in August 1918. After the war, he joined the board of directors of the family-owned Phönix factory, of which he had been a co-owner since his father's death in 1916. In 1925 he married Mária Rott, and he supported the artistic career of her sister, Edit Bán (née Rott Edit Ida Erzsébet, 1905–1966), a painter and sculptor, during her years in Hungary. János Thorma painted a portrait of his wife in 1929. The couple had one son.

With his family, Bedő lived in Budapest in the Bedő House – designed by Emil Vidor and regarded as an outstanding example of Hungarian Art Nouveau – originally built by his father.¹⁶ It was here that he displayed his remarkable

11 FITZ 1999-2002, vol. I. 200.

12 ILLÉS 2025.

13 LAMPÉ – TÓTH 1986: He is regarded as the founder of clinical otorhinolaryngology.

14 RÉTI 1994, 335.

15 BEKE 1996, 375-387.

16 Today, this building (Budapest, Honvéd Street 3) houses the establishment of The House of Hungarian Art Nouveau. Rudolf Bedő's father, Béla Bedő, purchased the plot in 1901. The design

art collection. In his youth, he primarily collected lithographs and memorabilia related to theatre and mining history; later, his interest turned towards Hungarian naïve art and subsequently modern painting. He was equally engaged with Hungarian and international art and conducted art-historical research. After the Second World War, this became his principal occupation: he published art-historical articles on a regular basis and curated several painting exhibitions. From 1952, he was a member of the working committee led by Lajos Vajer for the project *150 Years of Hungarian Art, 1848–1867*. His final publication, on the Baroque painter Francesco del Cairo (1607–1665) appeared in 1975 in the *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts*, Budapest.



Figure 1- Rudolf Bedő at home around 1930. Courtesy of Kieselbach Galéria.

of the building extended beyond the architectural structure to include its interior furnishings. Its style follows international trends, combining elements of Belgian Art Nouveau and German Jugendstil. The façade and interior spaces were designed by Emil Vidor using ceramics produced by the Zsolnay factory, incorporating motifs inspired by Hungarian folk art (1903). After the Second World War, the building fell into disrepair and underwent multiple alterations. Between 2003 and 2007, it was restored to its original appearance, reconstructed on the basis of historical photographs. See DABASI 2019; ÉPÍTÉSZFÓRUM 2021.

Following his father's death, Bedő inherited not only the management of the factory but also the art collection, which he subsequently expanded with exceptional professional expertise and a consciously developed collecting strategy.¹⁷ Among his favourite artists were Tivadar Csontváry Kosztka, József Rippl-Rónai, Béla Kádár, and numerous painters of the Nagybánya school, whose works he acquired in large numbers, becoming one of Hungary's most prominent private collectors. His Budapest residence conveyed a museum-like atmosphere not only because of the paintings: alongside furniture designed by Emil Vidor, he acquired antique furnishings and distinctive metalwork and ceramics, which he used to furnish his home. Another remarkable aspect of the collection is that it survived, largely intact the turbulent events of the twentieth century.

Although paintings and works of applied art constitute the core of his collection, Bedő's collecting activities—attested by the two amulets that entered the Semmelweis Museum's holdings – extended to objects from very early historical periods. To date, however, no source or record has been identified that would clarify how and from where the Egyptian amulets, which differ from his usual collecting practice, came into Rudolf Bedő's possession.

THE DJED PILLAR AMULET OF THE SEMMELWEIS MUSEUM (INV. NO. 67.844.1)

As a hieroglyph, this shape was given the number R11 in the Gardiner sign list among the temple equipment, which clearly shows that it is interpreted as a cult object, a fetish.¹⁸ From the beginning of hieroglyphic writing, it was also used as a symbol for the word "*durability, stability, firmness*", and sounded as djed.

Description: The suspension loop on the top has a rounded square shape, which is undrilled. The 4-crossbars capital is slightly elongated, barely shorter than the stem. Between the horizontal bands drawn slightly upwards, the side edges of the hohlkehles go straight inwards in a transverse direction. Their surface is flat. Beneath the capital, there is a narrow torus ending in a small raised horizontal border. The stem widens in a gentle curve downwards. Its cross-section is rectangular rounded at the corners, and the base is slightly projecting. The back is flat with a raised back pillar, which is at the top part bevelled. It is pierced behind the capital between the first and second crossbars. The amulet is a real statuette, as the pillar is free-standing (figures 2a-c).

17 MOLNOS – KIESELBACH 2010, 364.

18 BONNET 1952, 150, left; HORNUNG 1971, 24-26.



Figure 2. The djed pillar amulet of the © Semmelweis Museum, photo by Eszter Blahák

Technical details: The amulet of the Semmelweis Museum is made of blue-green glazed faience, its height corresponds to the average, height: 3,3 cm, width: 1,6 cm, depth: 0,6 cm; and is made with a mould.

Finding place: unknown

Date: To date the djed pillar amulets is very difficult, as several different styles were used at the same time and place. Ancient Egyptian used to collect even in one set different styles – see for instance the Saqqara assemblage CG 53.319-53.387¹⁹, where – because of the symmetrical positioning of the amulets – two djed pillars were used at the same position of the two sides of the mummy, but the shapes were distinctly different. Thus, a certain date cannot be stipulated to this object, but the most probable is the Late Period, 26th-30th Dynasties.

Parallels: no exact parallel is known for us. The design of the capital of the pillar is the same as at the also undated CG5991-5995 (green faience, height between 2-3,3 cm, unknown site), or Metropolitan Museum 74.51.4513 (light blue faience, H: 4,5 cm), but the other details are different. British Museum

19 Vernier 1909, pl. XCII.

EA20523²⁰ has a similar stem, having on the back side the name of *Neb-mehy, the embalmer* (glass, H: 3 cm, found at Tell Gumaiyima, a small tell roughly 8 km south of San el-Hagar/Tanis, EES mission) dated to 1st c. BC, but of different material and the pillar's capital is much more angular. In terms of proportions and shape of the stem the most nearer to this amulet, we could find is in the Petrie Museum, LDUCE-UC38597, originating from Hawara in the 26th dynasty cemetery.²¹

REPRESENTATION OF THE DJED PILLAR

The ancient Egyptian culture knew and used the image and symbolism of the djed pillar during practically the entire period of the pharaonic era. In Djoser's pyramid, they were lined up in decorative friezes as magical signs on the tiles of the false doors and on the walls at the steps to the South tomb. Later, it was interpreted as an architectural element, indeed as a pillar.²²



Figure 3. Djed columns of the 1st Dynasty. Helwan, excavated by Zaki J. Saad in 1942.

Its earliest sculpture (figure 3) is known from a 1st Dynasty tomb in Helwan,²³ a slightly tilted ivory column, on top of which four rows of closely spaced vertical fibres were tied in circles. The lower edges of the fibres of the bottom row end below the horizontal strands cut to the same length. Several interpretations are available, but the debate is ongoing. The following are a few examples. According to some assumptions, its shape resembles a tree with lopped-off branches²⁴ or a pole with tied reeds,²⁵ while Wolfgang Helck suggests²⁶ that it would have been created by tying

20 https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA20523.

21 M: 3,15x1 cm, pale blue faience, <https://collections.ucl.ac.uk/Details/petrie/4316>

22 BONNET 1952, 150: e.g. pillar of the sky; for real architectural djed pillars in Saqqara New Kingdom tombs, see e.g. GAUTHIER 1935, 92-96; DIJK 1986; BERLANDINI 1988.

23 SAAD 1947, 27, pl. XIVb; SAAD 1942, 407, pl. 39; cf. GRIFFITH 1980, 21.

24 SETHE 1930, 16, §16.

25 SCHÄFER 1932; MÜLLER 1933, 188.

26 HELCK 1954, 408-409.

several layers of ears of wheat to a sheaf tree in four circles during harvest to propitiate and appease the spirit living in the grain. Hartwig Altenmüller²⁷ also considers this latter interpretation to be questionable based on the colours of the Old Kingdom depictions. Therefore, he prefers to think of tied reeds or branches of a deciduous tree as a starting point for the depiction. Whatever the original idea was, it slowly faded into oblivion, and new interpretations took its place. Its shape also changed.

During the 3rd Dynasty, it was already present in its classic relief form, where the stem slightly thickens downwards without any fibre ends below the lowest crossbar of the capital, and the column changed to be a pillar. During the Middle Kingdom period the object was used not only as a pendant or decoration, but we can find it in other function, such as for instance a clasp of a bracelet (figure 4).²⁸ From this time, the pillar was also depicted in a personified form and associated with Osiris. The pictorial representation of this relationship was canonized by the time of the 18th Dynasty,²⁹ and the djed pendant was also included in the spells of the Book of the Dead (BD155), where it can be found up to the Ptolemaic period. According to this, the Egyptians themselves considered the djed to be the backbone of Osiris. A consequence of this idea is that its personified form also reflects various aspects of Osiris. Its being of Osiris is also expressed by the fact that it regularly appears together with the Isis knot on various household or funeral items³⁰ and jewellery,³¹ or

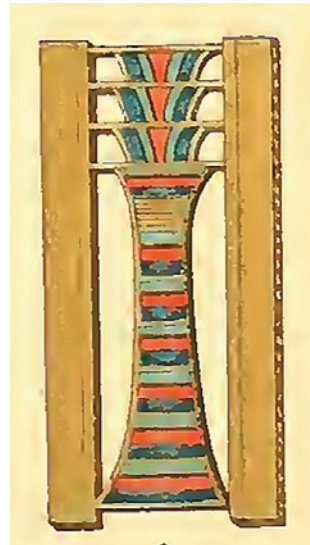


Figure 4. The djed clasp of Sithathor, found by Jacques J.M. de MORGAN at Dahshur in 1894. Dyn. 12. Cairo, CG52.041.

27 ALTENMÜLLER 1975, 1100: SMITH 1946, 380, no. R11 – the colours of the upper part are green or red, the stem black, white, yellow or red, sometimes green.

28 MORGAN 1895, 60, no. 2, pl. XV, XVI = MORGAN 1903, 64, pl. V, no.41 = VERNIER 1927, CG52.041-52.042

29 BONNET 1952, 150, 152.

30 E.g. in the hand of Khonsu on his coffins, Metropolitan Museum 86.1.1a, b from Deir el-Medineh (TT1) - <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/544704>, inlays in the jewellery chest of Sithathoriunet (Metropolitan Museum, 16.1.1) - <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/545520>, yoke hanger from Amarna, Berlin ÄM21944/03, faience, beads – <https://id.smb.museum/object/593977>, holding the hands of shabtis, e.g. Metropolitan Museum 30.8.67 – <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/548343>, etc.

31 E.g. chair of Hatnefer, Metropolitan Museum 36.3.1, on the back the decoration row consists of

by the fact that it happened to be modelled on the back of some statuettes of Osiris.³² The crowns placed on the top of the pillar beginning by the Saite period also refer to him. It is a typical phenomenon in the cult of Osiris that the djed pillar appeared surmounted by the *ankh* sign as decoration of the stand for his *henu*-barque in Abydos.³³

The djed pillar was also strongly connected to Ptah – in his typical representation he is holding in front of him a combined staff uniting the djed, *ankh* and *was* signs.³⁴ The pillar sometimes also occurred with the depiction of Khonsu between the royal regalia.³⁵ The djed with two ba birds are also connected to Ptah. He himself was called in a variant of the BD142 (chapter for being transformed into an *ꜥḥ ikr* / *excellent spirit* with the enumeration of the names of Osiris) as "*the noble djed (of) the house of Ra*"³⁶. Also the raising of the djed pillar seems to be performed originally in his capital, Memphis, which became part of the jubilee celebration of the kings.

Andrew H. Gordon and Calvin W. Schwabe think that the idea of the djed being the backbone of Osiris is developed from the observation of the bull's sacrum and lumbar spine,³⁷ which has a similar shape (figure 5). A connection can be driven through Ptah, whose manifestation was the Apis bull – symbol of strength and fertility –, which animal became Osorapis after death latest from the 18th Dynasty, thus he was then assimilated to Osiris.

djed and tjet symbols and a Bes figure – time of Thutmose II – Hatshepsut/Thutmose III, found in front of the tomb of Senenmut (TT71) <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/543868>. See also HAYES 1959, 201, fig. 115; REISNER 1907, 137-138, pl. XII: inlaid gilded wood, M: 11,6x14,4 cm, front: scarab between two goddesses, back: Isis knot and djed pillar beside each other; REISNER 1907, 132, pl. XI, CG12188: site unknown, M: 9x8,7 cm, blue green faience, front: djed between Isis knots, back: on naos lying jackal; REISNER 1907, 135-136, pl. XII, CG 12196: tomb of Hatiay, Gurna 1896, gilded and inlaid wood, front: scarab between djed and tjet, back: bottom of scarab with heart scarab chapter (BD32)

32 E.g. an Osiris bronze statuette in the Metropolitan Museum, X.352.4, Late to Ptolemaic period, H: 13 cm; Emory Collection 2018.010.109: bronze, H: 11,6 cm, 26th Dynasty – <https://collections.carlos.emory.edu/objects/38257/osiris-statuette?ctx=f0892f73f07daa6e002aacd4d8c18a8c156b458f&idx=41>

33 EATON 2006, 80-81, fig. 3.

34 E.g. CG38429, in DARESSY 1905, pl. XXV, or other statuettes on this and the next plates. For Khonsu, grabbing the djed pillar see e.g. CG38488, in DARESSY 1905, pl. XXVIII.

35 E.g. CG38488, CG38489, see in DARESSY 1905, pl. XXVIII.

36 BUDGE 1898, 325, chapter CXLII, at the end of §IV: *Pḥ ḏd(wj) šps st-R* (originated from Lepsius, Todtenbuch, Bl. 59), Ptolemaic. In the same chapter, in §I Osiris is identified with Ptah *nb-ꜥḥ* / "*master of life*".

37 GORDON – SCHWABE 2004, 119-120. .



Figure 5. A bull's sacrum and the last three lumbar vertebrae. GORDON – SCHWABE 2004, 120, fig. 6.8.

The connections of the djed pillar also extended in other directions. It was depicted together with the sun disk, scarab or *ankh* sign³⁸ on various cult objects and jewellery,³⁹ pointing to a solar direction.

Vincent BROWN (2002) also suggests that the image of the djed pillar may have originated as a depiction of four papyrus columns behind each other, supportin the four corners of the sky.

Middle Kingdom design scarabs depict it among the hieroglyphs. One of them⁴⁰ for instance represents a djed between two *ankh* signs. Above them two *wedjat* eyes can be seen and in the first, upper row a *nefer*"good, beautiful" sign between two standing *hotep*"offering" signs can be seen. It is clearly not an inscription, but a protective magical composition. The way of the use of the djed sign here points not to a symbol for any god, but as a hieroglyph with the special meaning of "endurance, stability and permanence", conferring these qualities to the owner. As the djed is often flanked by two *ankh*"life"-signs, it certainly was meant to bring about the periodical renewal of life with appropriate offerings and general protection.⁴¹

38 E.g. on CG46206 [5] a libation vase of Thutmose IV: the djed lifted up its arms, and ankh signs are suspended to its elbows CARTER – NEWBERRY 1904b, 60, pl. XIX.

39 E.g. on pectorals – REISNER 1907, 140, pl. XII, CG 12203, M: 11,3x16,1 cm, wood covered by plaster and varnish, from the tomb of Sennedjem, Gurnet Murrari. Front side: solar bark with scarab in naos flanked by Isis and Nephthys, back side: scarab on *akhet* with inscription (BD30B), flanked by a djed pillar at both sides – they have arms and are decorated by ribbons; REISNER 1907, 140-141, pl. XII, CG 12204, M: 13,6x18,4 cm, wood and black slate(?) with colour paint, also from the tomb of Sennedjem, front and back similar to the previous one, but with simple djed pillars; REISNER 1907, 153, pl. XVIII, CG12231: light green faience, M: 3,5x2,9 cm, front: cow in a naos, above *wedjat* eye, above it sun disc between two djed signs. – Also between two *ankh* signs e.g. REISNER 1907, 152, pl. XVIII, CG12229: pectoral in the shape of a naos, inside a djed sign between two *ankh* signs; Metropolitan Museum 26.7.906, faience pectoral of Mutneferet, Ramesside – <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/544772>

40 Metropolitan Museum 20.1.23: M: 2,2x1,5x1 cm. glazed steatite, mid 13th Dynasty (ca. 1760-1670), excavated by the Metropolitan Museum mission in the late Middle Kingdom cemetery of Lisht – <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/545701>

41 Metropolitan Museum scarab 22.1.342, from the museum's excavation at Lisht, late Middle Kingdom cemetery, has also a djed pillar on its bottom between an *ankh* and a *maat* sign carved on

During religious rites, some cult objects were decorated with ribbons.⁴² In this way, the stem of the djed pillar could also be surrounded by them, which in the case of the representations was displayed by colourful, horizontal bands on the stem – this was often realised by inlays. These ribbons occur at the typical temple act of the raising of the djed pillar, depicted for instance in the Abydos temple of Seti I.⁴³ However, the djed pillar is most often known from funeral context, such as architectural element of Saqqara tombs, as already referred to, part of burial assemblages, or substitution for Osiris, the Netherworld's god as on the bottom side of the sarcophagus of Gemeneferbak,⁴⁴ where the judge and vizier wearing the figure of Maat on his neck worships a djed pillar higher than himself.

DJED PILLAR AMULETS

Djed amulets⁴⁵ were crafted from the 6th Dynasty⁴⁶ to the Roman era, and could display both the cult object and the hieroglyph⁴⁷ as a protective magical device. They were mostly made of green faience, which is common for amulets, but stone (especially carnelian and lapis lazuli), gold and wood are also among the prescribed raw materials. Glass is rare. CT 304 (IV.58) and

both sides of an oval encircling the sundisc and the nefer sign, confirming their meaning – <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/545230>. Flinders Petie also found among Serabit el-Khadim, New Kingdom offerings a djed-pillar amulet-pendant flanked by both sides an ankh sign standing on the neb-basket, clearly referring to the wish of a durable life. Royal Ontario Museum, inv. no. 906.16.24 - <https://collections.rom.on.ca/objects/183482/amulet-ankh-was-and-djed-on-neb-sign?ctx=34b516f8f985ddca6b01445805434559da6e1b86&idx=70>

42 HORNING 1971, 24-25.

43 PARK 1985.

44 Turin, Cat. 2201/01 and Cat. 2201/02, 26th Dynasty (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/hen-magonza/5822338534/in/photostream/>).

45 MÜLLER-WINKLER 1987, 336-354.

46 PETRIE 1914, 15, no. 35, pl. 3-4, 44 gives 6th Dynasty, but among the amulets listed, 35a is written with a question mark for the earliest date. He found most of these amulets in the area of the chest, but for site he only gives Hawara, for the 26th Dynasty pieces (35c2-12); BRUNTON 1928, pl. XCIX dates the earliest piece in Qau (68H6, tomb 4802, gold) to the 8th Dynasty, the rest to the 9th Dynasty. For those belonging to group F, there is a slight indentation between the horizontal projections, for group H the side edges are all in one line, resulting at straight sides. The number of projecting bands is 2, 3 and 4. The suspension was typically done with a prominent suspension loop on the back, only in one case (68H6, tomb 4909, faience) was the plate pierced horizontally. Most of the amulets were pressed by mould, and are made from faience. On the other hand, during his excavations in Mostagedda (BRUNTON 1937, pl. LVII), he also published an ivory specimen from a tomb dated to the 6th Dynasty with the classification 68F2.

47 MÜLLER-WINKLER 1987, 339-340, note 381: ALTENMÜLLER 1975.

BD 151 also give green stone/faience as the raw material, while BD 155 asks for gold. The quality of workmanship in this class of amulets is varied in each period, but the iconography in essence is the same all along the pharaonic and Greco-Roman culture. The djed amulets have been around since their appearance, but they became popular mostly during the 18th and 26th-30th Dynasties.

The shape of the amulet changed over the millennia only in the proportions of the constituent elements, size and style, which differences Claudia Müller-Winkler does not consider to be time-specific. In her great work on most of the object-amulets, she finds as exceptions to this only the early djed form around the time of its formation and some of the Amarna amulets (figure 6).⁴⁸ By refining the dating of the djed pillars,⁴⁹ it can be concluded that the djed amulets made in the early period of amulet making are all plaque amulets used in necklaces or bracelets, and most of them fit into the categories 68F and 68H created in Guy Brunton's system.⁵⁰ The goldsmiths' works of the Middle Kingdom, however, were made in the later classical proportions, with inlaid bands on the front. In the following, when reviewing the amulets, we will primarily focus on this iconography for faience and stone djed pillar amulets, at most referring to gold amulets that may coincide with their form.



From the 2nd Period of amulet making, the well-known classical form became common. It became almost exclusive from the New Kingdom period in many varieties, although there are exceptions. From this time, the stem often ends with a pedestal pointing to a way of use by setting it up on a base. For the basic djed amulet Claudia Müller-Winkler found the capital to stem relation 1 to 2.⁵¹ Suspension was made during the New Kingdom by means of a ring bead or suspension loop above the capital. In the Amarna period the pillar could also be supplemented by a lower bead or loop, indicating that the item was part of a multi-strand necklace. However,

Figure 6. Djed amulet from Amarna, © Petrie Museum LDUCE-UC1104

48 MÜLLER-WINKLER 1987, 344-345: As a mark for recognition, she names the vertical division of the body, the complete filling of the pillar's head, and the suspension loop (usually a ring bead) located both at the top and at the bottom. E.g. PETRIE 1914, pl. III, 35 (<https://collections.ucl.ac.uk/Details/petrie/7915>); Roemer und Pelizäus Museum, Hildesheim 6166, faience, M: 2.9 x 1,6 x 0,7 cm, <http://www.globalegyptianmuseum.com/record.aspx?id=11534>; Boston MFA02.617: green glass, H: 3 cm, with a 4 compartments ring bead on the top; no provenience, <https://collections.mfa.org/download/131652>

49 GYÓRY 1993, vol. I, 65-74.

50 For Middle Kingdom specimens e.g. BRUNTON 1927, pl. XXXV, tomb 7791; QUIBELL 1898, 3, no. 3, pl. III, no. 15.

51 MÜLLER-WINKLER 1987, 343.

this type of use dates back to the 12th Dynasty, as a gold amulet with two suspension rings, and with carnelian, turquoise and lapis lazuli inlays, was found in Dahshur during the excavations of the Metropolitan Museum.⁵² The inlaying was still used in the 18th dynasty, and is attested to in the tombs of the most distinguished individuals,⁵³ including several pharaohs.⁵⁴ The continuous change in taste is reflected in the fact that a new type of visual expression was created in the Amarna period, the characteristics of which are already present in the court and surroundings of Pharaoh Amenhotep III. According to the finds from Malkata, they were actually developed in the pre-Amarna period, and the rise of the cult of Aten favoured their spread.⁵⁵



Figure 7. Djed pillar from the burial of Tiye in Deir el-Bahari, 21st Dynasty. © Metropolitan Museum, 25.3.172c

In this second period of amulet making, the capital of the djed consistently contains four horizontal bands, with the only exception, to my knowledge, being a specimen⁵⁶ found in Deir el-Bahari from a 21st Dynasty burial, with two bands of capital (figure 7), which is presumably a workshop peculiarity, since the classical form is also typical at this place and in this period.

From the 22nd Dynasty onwards, the plaque amulet form was practically replaced by the standing statuette form of the djed pillar, the stability of which was also aided by a back pillar, although in some cases this seems to be merely decorative – since it was most often worn on a chain, so it was not needed, unless the amulet was to be strung up through it.

In the second half of this period of amulet making, which

52 Metropolitan Museum, 26.7.1302, H. 2 cm, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/545726>

53 The Walters Art Museum 61-214: wood with glass inlay, M: 9.72 x 3.47 x 1.22 cm. <http://art.thewalters.org/detail/3243/djed-pillar/>

54 E.g. Tutankhamun, Carter's no. 256hhh (<http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/perl/gi-ca-qmakesumm.pl?sid=82.131.230.142-1766356119&qno=1&curr=256hhh>)

55 Malkata, E. side of S. Village or Khor west of camp, Metropolitan Museum excavation, mould for a djed pillar, M: 2,7x1,7 cm. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/559173>; tomb of Amenhotep III (Wv22): Metropolitan Museum, 26.7.1081: faience, M: 1,9x0,7x0,2 cm. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/571946> (From this same tomb there is also a djed pillar with double ring bead instead of the suspension loop – Metropolitan Museum 26.7.1093, faience, 2,4x1,1x0,2 cm) for the last two see also HAYES 1959, 243 – similarly rectangular capital from the assembly of a disturbed burial in Sennefer (TT99: scarab, ureus and djed) in the Fitzwilliam Museum: <http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/tt99/finds/amulets.html>

56 E.g. Metropolitan Museum, 25.3.172c: very simple, with only two horizontal band, tomb MMA 60, Pit, Burial of Tiye (P3), found by the Museum's excavations in 1923–24. M: 1,5 cm, reddish green glass. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/587554>

began in the Saite period, the use of the classical shape in its many variations continued, and the back pillar was an essential iconographic element. However, it is quite new that from now on a crown could be placed above the capital,⁵⁷ although such composite djed amulets are much rarer in proportion than the simple forms. Suspension was typically achieved by drilling a hole in the back pillar behind the capital, which use survived into the Ptolemaic and Roman times.

Despite the change in the method of suspension, the shape of the loop at the top of the capital remained in place. In the case of simple djed pillar amulets it even took on diverse decorative shapes. The elaboration of the hohlkehles between the crossbars of the capital also continued to show numerous variations. A new perception is displayed by a rare djed pillar group,⁵⁸ which has the winged sun disk pattern – common on temple facades – on the hohlkehle parts of the capital; and the top of the capital has an atef crown placed on ram's horn. It seems to be Ptolemaic in age. Many of the amulets are stout, standing on a strongly projecting base. Undrilled pieces were also made, which could be placed between bandages, or put on a stand.

Inscriptions are rarely found on djed pillar amulets. They are usually placed on the trunk and contains the name of the owner⁵⁹ and/or refer to Book of the Dead chapters 151⁶⁰ or 155, thus the amulets intended to help the deceased in the afterlife.

The simple djed amulets were sometimes included in compositions. The simplest way to do double djed amulet⁶¹ was to paste two djed pillars together to form a double-row chain, which was worn strung together, similar

57 E.g. Petire Museum LDUCE-UC38647, PETRIE 1898, pl. XXVI, end of last line; amulet group 21 in PETRIE 1914, 16-17, pl. IV, no. 40b. <https://collections.ucl.ac.uk/Details/petrie/41596>

58 Metropolitan Museum 10.130.1812, faience, M: 9,3x3,5x0,7 cm; REISNER 1907, 107, pl. VII, CG12057, faience, 8,5 cm, not pierced.

59 E.g. Cairo, JE95306: djed amulet of Tuya, H: 8,5 cm, wood with glass inlay – <http://www.globalegyptianmuseum.com/record.aspx?id=14839>; cf. djed emblem with the cartouche of Ramsesz IX from the Serapeum, Apis burial, Louvre N 5416, wood, H: 33 cm – <https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010007788>.

60 E.g. the djed pillar of Yuya, CG 51035, which had no brick at all. Cf. CG 46045, where the spell was inscribed on the pedestal for the djed pillar, tomb Thutmose IV, burial chamber, Western wall – the pillar itself was not found by the excavators anymore (CARTER – NEWBERRY 1904, 10)

61 REISNER 1907, 17-18, CG 5341-5346: faience, back flat, pierced lengthwise both parts, H: 4 cm, from Saqqara 1860, only the last one is 2,5 cm high and without provenience. All the capitals of the pillars are built in a block, closed at the top by the horizontal band, and the hohlkehle is divided by vertical lines; the stem is divided into two halves and separated by a wedge-shaped groove at the bottom, see e.g. CG 5299 (REISNER 1907, pl. I); CG 12021-12022, REISNER 1907, pl. VII, faience, back flat, pierced lengthwise, H: 2,8 cm, provenience unknown.

to the double *tjet* amulets.⁶² One of the amulets in the Museum of Fine Arts⁶³ was worn in the same way, though it depicts the two djed pillars in raised relief placed side by side on a small rectangular plate.

During the 18th Dynasty, it was also used as an additional element in front of the figure of Taweret,⁶⁴ together with the *ankh sign*.⁶⁵ The amulet composition seems to have appeared in the time of Amenhotep III, in Malkata⁶⁶ and its production seems to have ceased by the Ramesside period.

The djed pillar also appears on amulets between two adoring baboons,⁶⁷ who greet it in the same way as the rising sun god is usually depicted greeted at dawn. The amulet-scene can be dated presumably to the Ptolemaic period.

As part of an amulet composition combined with the *ꜥnkh* "life" and *wꜣs* "power" signs (figure 8),⁶⁸ it expresses a concise wish, with the *neb*: "all life, stability and power"⁶⁹ but the three standing signs can also refer to a divine triad, since it represents the figure of Osiris between the *ꜥnh* = Su and the *wꜣs* = Tefnut.⁷⁰ Russel A. Rudzwick also had an



Figure 8. The signs from the foundation deposit of the Mut Temple, Tanis. *wꜣs*, *ꜥd* and *ꜥnh* in a rectangle table. Reign of Siamon (975-976 BC)
© Louvre, E 16223.

62 MÜLLER-WINKLER 1987, 345.

63 Budapest, Museum of Fine Arts, inv. no. 51.2621, back flat, black glazed grey faience, with two parallel vertical holes. M: 2,8x2 cm (GYÖRY 1993, vol. II, 70), cf. NELSON ET ALII 1978, no. 305.

64 E.g. BIENKOWSKI – TOOLEY 1995, no. 155. For a summary of her amulet types see GYÖRY 2022.

65 E.g. Metropolitan Museum 21.6.47, faience, M: 3x3x0,4 cm – <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/566849>; HORNUNG – BRYAN 2002, no. 155.

66 E.g. Metropolitan Museum 11.215.164.

67 E.g. MOND – MYERS 1934, III, pl. XCIII, 178, tomb 16 (Ptolemaios XI); PETRIE 1914, no. 40d (Dendera, group 26); Metropolitan Museum 23.10.57, gold sheet, 2,4x1,8 cm, probably from Saqqara. Cf. McGregor papyrus, Petrie 1914, pl. 48, no. 74.

68 E.g. on a basket: PETRIE 1914, 15, no. 35h, pl. 3; REISNER 1907, 110, CG12073, pl. VIII; Royal Ontario Museum, 906.16.24 from Serabit e Khadim, Petrie's excavation, New Kingdom – <https://collections.rom.on.ca/objects/183482/amulet-ankh-was-and-djed-on-neb-sign?ctx=34b516f8f985ddca6b01445805434559da6e1b886&idx=70>; Metropolitan Museum, 26.7.1043, gilded faience

– <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/570354>; E 21422 in the Louvre (faience, H: 6,75 cm) – <https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010017229>. Also on a baseline: CARTER – NEWBERRY 1904, 133f, no. 46.486, pl. 26, nos. 22-24. in a tablet: Louvre 16223, Tanis, Mut temple's foundation deposit found by Pierre Marie Montet in 1938. M: 4x3,5 cm, reign of Siamun

69 The combination of these words is common e.g. PETRIE 1914, 15, pl. III, 35h; SCHÄFER 1933, 3, fig. 2. See as these combinations brought by Bes for the new year in BERLANDINI 1994, 14, fig. 5.

70 JUNKER 1907, 64; WINTER 1968, especially from p. 76.

interesting observation concerning the two signs framing the djed pillar still in 2002. As he wrote in a letter “I believe they refer to Osiris because Coffin Text Spell 837 reads in part ‘Live, Osiris! ... Lift up your hand which bears (the sign of) life, make firm your hand which bears the was staff, so that you may be the *dd*-pillar of the gods.’ See Faulkner, R.O. The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts. Volume III, Warminster 1978, pages 23 and 24. ... and these hieroglyphs may also be a cryptogram of Osiris, similar to the cryptograms/trigrams of Amun, as put forth by E. Drioton.”

The djed pillar is again sometimes placed between two Isis knots⁷¹ or two *s3*”*protection*” signs,⁷² making their protective power durable. Also a wish could be behind the Isis knot, *ankh* and djed triad.⁷³



A particular statuette-amulet composition presents the simple djed pillar erected before the god Anubis.⁷⁴ A yellow glass reported by Petrie is probably of the Ptolemaic period.⁷⁵

There were also composite forms of the djed pillar, where a crown is added above the capital as an integral component of the djed pillar. This is most often the atef crown typical on the head of Osiris – the close relationship of the djed and Osiris is shown for instance by the epithet *3tf.tj* “that with the atef-crown” applied to the pillar.⁷⁶ This crown is often complemented by the ram’s horn, sun disk⁷⁷ and uraeus snake (figure 9). The double ostrich feather crown,⁷⁸

Figure 9. Djed pillar with atef cown from Dendera, early Roman period.

© Petrie Museum LDUCE-UC38647

71 REISNER 1907, CG5386-5393. A spacer in the Louvre (N 4333, M: 1,9x2,4 cm, faience) is showing the revers, as there are two djed pillars with one Isis knot.

72 E.g. DUNHAM 1967, 32, pl. 23A; BRESCIANI 1977, 93, pl. 37, no. 34.498.

73 E.g. CG46486 [22, 23], CG46487 [24], faience, they were put beside each other on a stand, from tomb of Thotmes IV. (CARTER – NEWBERRY 1902b, 133-134, pl. XXVI on p. 123.

74 E.g. Metropolitan Museum 10.130.2444; PETRIE 1914, 15, pl. III, 35m; CG38556, faience H: 4,8 cm, from Abusir; CG38565, acacia, H: 4,9 cm (DARESSY 1906, 146 and 148, pl. 31); Louvre, N 4057 (?) – <https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010010414>; Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest inv. no. 51.2297: wood, H: 3 cm. (GYÖRY 1993, II. 175)

75 PETRIE 1914, 35m.

76 BONNET 1952, 57, right side.

77 ALTENMÜLLER 1975, 1103, BONNET 1952, 372, fig. 174: the sun disc referring to Osiris-Ra.

78 E.g. PETRIE 1914, 17, no. 40b,c, pl. IV; Metropolitan Museum 17.194.2526, dated to 525-30 BC, yellow glass, 3,4x1,3 cm, without any suspension hole or loop, thus wrapped between the

which is common in depictions of the revived Osiris,⁷⁹ is rarer. Both crowns or variations of both crowns are known from the 26th Dynasty and the following periods. In individual cases, other additional elements may also be associated with the amulet. Such is the sun disk, which can be seen on a piece in Turin⁸⁰ purchased in the 19th century.



Sometimes this composite pillar is made part of a composition, as CG5325, where it stands between Isis and Nephthys. An incomplete copy is also kept by the National Museum in Warsaw.⁸¹

The anthropomorph (figure 10), complex form of the pillar is rare among the amulets. However, similar to paintings and reliefs, djed pillar amulets also might depict the figure of Osiris. In such cases, a pair of eyes could be painted between the two central crossbars of the capital,⁸² and it can be provided with arms grasping the *ḥkꜣ* and *nḥꜣḥꜣ* scepters of Osiris by its hands,⁸³ or holding *wꜣꜣ* scepter either with its two hands,⁸⁴ or one

Figure 10. Anthropomorph djed with triple atef crown.
© Petrie Museum LDUCE-UC38607.

bandages – <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/559435> or without the sun disc: Metropolitan Museum 17.194.2529, blue glass. M: 3,3x1 cm.

79 LANZONE 1881, Testo: 783, Tavola: 296, fig. 2.

80 Turin, Museo Egizio, Cat. 1067. https://collezioni.museoegizio.it/en-GB/material/Cat_1067/?description=djed+pillar&inventoryNumber=&title=&cgt=&yearFrom=&yearTo=&materials=&rovenance=&acquisition=&epoch=&dynasty=&pharaoh=&searchLng=en-GB&searchPage=5. See also Hermitage, Saint Petersburg, inv. no. 2667, bronz amulet, H: 8,8 cm – <https://www.globalegyptianmuseum.org/record.aspx?id=13275> and Musée Royal de Mariemont, B.510.6, stone, H: 5,5 cm, Ptolemaic (Derricks – Delvaux 2009, 254 = <https://www.globalegyptianmuseum.org/record.aspx?id=16198>).

81 Warsaw National Museum 142688 MNW, faience, M: 7,9x6,8 cm. Third Intermediate Period.

82 E.g. Randall-MacIver – Mace 1902, 91, pl. LI.3, tomb D14: the djed is inscribed on the stem with the name Pa-ib-mer, 19th Dynasty. Given to Chicago, Oriental Institute Museum, E6792, faience, H: 16,3 cm, found at the Western wall of the burial chamber of Paibmer, Abydos, but no brick or niche is mentioned with it – <https://isac-idb.uchicago.edu/id/fbce2d10-bf4c-4a72-8645-0ab263ef6d75>

83 E.g. Attaix n.y., 12; also referring to the Louvre #N 4493 amulet as close parallel. See also Louvre E 2253 – H: 3,7 cm, verre rouge – <https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010011999>; Reisner 1907, CG13.565.

84 E.g. Petrie 1914, 15, no. 35h, pl. 3g; Louvre AF2919, bought from Drovetti in 1827, H: 10,1 cm – <https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010007580>

in front of the torso depicted as the cloth of Osiris, while he is also wearing a crown on the capital.⁸⁵ In Mariemont, a unique amulet presents a complete merging of Osiris and the djed pillar, by modelling the god with a djed pillar's capital.⁸⁶

The par excellence use of the djed pillar amulet was to put it on the body of the deceased. According to the Book of the Dead chapter 155, it should be placed on the neck of the deceased at the funeral, as it happened for instance in the case of Tutankhamun, who had two pillars hanging on separate gold wires on his neck, along with a similarly worn Isis knot and a papyrus column amulet in the second layer,⁸⁷ but we can find it also elsewhere.⁸⁸ Another important way of its use was to put it at the wall of the burial, or beside the sarcophag containing the mummy, as already mentioned.

THE DJED PILLAR IN WRITTEN SOURCES

The djed was not just a simple word with the meaning of *stability, endurance and durability*, but also had a cult of its own. In this respect it took the form of the god *Dd špsj* “the noble Djed”. This god was worshiped in the Old Kingdom cemetery of Memphis, where the deceased became *imzḥ* “the revered one; one who is provided” before him, and he was honoured with the epithets *ntr ʿz*, *nb pt* “great god, lord of the sky”; we even know of his priest.⁸⁹

His cult here was intertwined with the Memphis mortuary god Sokaris, at least as indicated by the annual temple ceremony, the “erection of the djed pillar” (*sḥꜣ dd*), which was initially the closing act of the Sokaris festival (on the 30th day of the 4th month of the *šwt* / “inundation-season”). This ritual took also place in several other towns from the Middle Kingdom,⁹⁰ including the Osiris festival at Busiris (*Ddw*). The ceremony symbolized the victory on the chaos

85 E.g. PETRIE 1914, 15, pl. III, 35g (<https://collections.ucl.ac.uk/Details/petrie/41557>); SCHÄFER 1932, 3, n. 1.

86 Musée Royal de Mariemont, where he is creating an unit with the four sons of Horus (B.510.1-5), serpentine, H: 11,5 cm, Ptolemaic, DERRIKS – DELVAUX 2009, 252-253; – <https://www.globalegyptianmuseum.org/record.aspx?id=16196> .

87 Griffith Institute, inv. TAA_i.4.01. <https://tutankhamun.griffith.ox.ac.uk/autopsy-drawings/taa-i41upper>. Carter's number of the amulets are 256kk (JE 61778) and 256HHH

88 E.g. a gold djed amulet on top of the head of the 25-29 years old woman, revealed by CT scanning in 2013 in the Rhind mummy from Thebes, 10 BC, now in the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh. See with picture <http://www.newscientist.com/blogs/shortsharpscience/2012/05/first-look-at-the-face-of-a-wo.html>

89 ALTENMÜLLER 1975, col. 1101, note 8.

90 ALTENMÜLLER 1975, col. 1101, note 12: Based on the Coffin texts, the ritual was also organised in Abydos, Herwer and Buto(?).

by Osiris triumphant over his enemies.⁹¹ The ritual was included in the acts of the king's cult in a similar sense, as the text of the dramatic Ramesseum papyrus⁹² attests in connection with Pharaoh Sesostri I. Here the pillar was said to be Seth, who was tied with crossed branches of the *imz*-tree, identified with Osiris, as a sign of defeat. Thus, the ceremony meant the “*establishment of Seth under Osiris*” (*sḥꜣ stḥ hr Wsir*), i.e. under his rule/power. The djed pillar being also a fertility symbol, the ceremony also ensured fertility of the fields, and the continuation of the just died god's rejuvenation under the shape of the corn mummy. Again during the reign of the New Kingdom, for the pharaohs, the rite symbolized the defeat of chaos represented by Seth, and the re-establishment of *mꜣꜥt* / “right, order”, they were responsible for.



During the Middle Kingdom, the djed symbol came also into close contact with the sun god Ra,⁹³ and remained so throughout the New Kingdom and later periods as attested in the vignette of BD16, where he raises the sun disk with both arms – the scene was also popular on pectorals.⁹⁴ Presumably, this scene originally expressed the constancy of the sun's cycle, but by the New Kingdom it was clearly applied to Osiris, as is attested by his placement between Isis and Nephthys.⁹⁵

Figure 11. Vignette of sunrise in the Papyrus of Any. 19th Dynasty.
© British Museum 10470,2.

91 ALTENMÜLLER 1975, col. 1101, notes 13-15.

92 Now in the British Museum, inv. no. EA10610,1- EA10610-5, "Papyrus Ramesseum B" (Dramatic Papyrus) [https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/search?title=Papyrus%20Ramesseum%20B%20\(the%20Dramatic%20Papyrus\)](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/search?title=Papyrus%20Ramesseum%20B%20(the%20Dramatic%20Papyrus)). For a general edition see Smith among Internet resources.

93 Cf. CT VI,165b, CT V,251b, CT VI, 324m.

94 E.g. pectorals, e.g. REISNER 1907, CG 12210, 144, pl. XIII: Saqqara 1860, 7x10,2 cm, green glazed steatite: in a naos offering scene, on the back djed pillar holding up a sun disc framed at both sides by an Isis knot. REISNER 1907, CG12211, 144, pl. XIII, site unknown, 4,2x6 cm, bluish green glazed white stone, a man offering djed pillars in a naos, back: djed holding up a sun disc, at his right an Isis knot.

95 E.g. CG41.065, SCHÄFER 1932, fig. 4, 13, 14, 21.

Another direction of the Memphite cult of the djed pillar points towards the god Ptah,⁹⁶ with whom it could also be considered identical, as is shown in a scene from the tomb of Heruef (TT192),⁹⁷ where the djed pillar takes on the form of Ptah, apart from the capital; or a Ptah statuette, whose back pillar is fashioned in the form of a djed pillar⁹⁸. Already during the 18th Dynasty several papyri named Osiris-Ptah, a united form of Osiris and Ptah.⁹⁹ Since Ptah-Sokaris, an aspect of the god Ptah in Memphis got united with that of Osiris in the form of Ptah-Sokaris-Osiris, the connection of the djed pillar with Osiris was strengthened from the 18th Dynasty in this way as well.

The complete identification of Osiris and the “*noble djed*” is shown by the epithet *Wsir dd šps* of Osiris,¹⁰⁰ or the *Wsir hnti imntiw* epithet of the djed pillar,¹⁰¹ and also the identification of the djed pillar with the spine of Osiris and the deceased (BD155). This is reflected in the fact that from the Ramesside period onwards, the image of the djed pillar also appears on the bottom of coffins, thus helping the rebirth of the deceased.¹⁰² Among the amulets, we only know clearly Osirian examples that can be dated to the 2nd half of the 2nd main period of amulet making.

Another funeral application of the djed pillar can be proven from the 18th dynasty: according to BD151, it was to be placed in a niche in front of the southern wall of the burial chamber, and according to BD 137A, it was to be placed in front of the western wall of the burial chamber; in both sources it had to be attached to a brick – and the same process was described for three other objects. Such a collection of finds is known from several places, e.g. from the burial of Henutmehit,¹⁰³ or from the tomb of Tutankhamun.¹⁰⁴ The custom may

96 BONNET 1952, 150, SANDMAN-HOLMBERG 1946, 154-166. See also e.g. a 19th Dynasty scarab in the Metropolitan Museum (26.7.458), where behind a djed pillar Ptah and Sekhmet are standing, above it a falcon and the sun disc – <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/549259>.

97 FAKHRY 1943, 478 (S16), pl. 39.

98 CG38.432, DARESSY 1905, pl. XXIV, DARESSY 1906, 117: black basalt, H: 41 cm, 19th Dynasty, on the base of the pillar in the offering formula, among the epithets of Ptah the *dd špsi* is also to read.

99 See e.g. BD 141/142 in HORNUNG 1990, 274, row 35.

100 GAUTHIER 1908, 161, pl. 6.

101 GAUTHIER 1935, 83.

102 E.g. SAWI 1987.

103 British Museum, EA 41.544-41.547 – http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/aes/m/magic_bricks_of_henutmehyt.aspx

104 JE 61379, Carter no. 260, found in the burial chamber: placed in a niche of the wall at the western end of South wall (as if it was tried to reconcile the two above mentioned spells), that is at the headside of the mummy. It “stood upright, facing east, upon a brick (pedestal) of unbaked clay” H: 9,2 cm, see also Brunton’s photograph p0884c. <http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/perl/gi-ca-qmakesumm.pl?sid=82.131.230.142-1766356119&qno=1&curr=260>. See also JE 61785, Carter

have been adopted in Nubia, because a djed pillar was found there inserted into a plaque and put in a niche of the burial chamber.¹⁰⁵

Its place around the mummy is also attested in BD166 chapter, where Khebekhsenuf is standing behind it, repelling the Hidden-of-Face demon, and he identifies the djed pillar expressis verbis with Osiris.

In Hellenistic and Roman temples, the djed pillar can be considered as the manifestation of the gods Onuris and Su.¹⁰⁶ The origin of the phenomenon goes back to the pharaonic period, as still in the Middle Kingdom, several spells of the Coffin texts¹⁰⁷ mentioning the double djed pillar assign it to a man-female pair, i.e. next to the male Djed there is a female Djedet, who are associated on a mythical level with the figures of Su and Tefnut,¹⁰⁸ or with the city of Busiris (*Ddw*) and Mendes (*Ddt*).¹⁰⁹



Figure 12. Late Middle Kingdom scarab from Lisht, by © Metropolitan Museum's excavations, 1920. Inv. no. 20.1.23

Again points to another direction the above mentioned Middle Kingdom design scarab¹¹⁰ with the hieroglyphs, excavated by the Metropolitan Museum mission in the late Middle Kingdom cemetery of Lisht. The pillar could here not refer to Djed Shepsi, Osiris, Sokaris, Ptah or Re, only to the meaning of the word of "endurance, stability or permanence", thus the sign was also used as a device for word magic. Since the Egyptians wore scarab-amulets both in life and in death, it was also intended to maintain physical life. Given this use, and the general characteristics of early amulets, namely that they were made to ward off dangers for specific body parts and different species of threat, a similar protective magical application can be assumed in relation to the djed pillar. Later this magical use was extended to a general protection for the full time of the use of the djed amulets by the solar and Osirian connections.

no. 250, a painted wooden djed pillar, which stood originally "between fourth inner shrine and sarcophagus, nearly central of south side of sarcophagus" <http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/perl/gi-ca-qmakesumm.pl?sid=82.131.230.142-1766356119&qno=1&curr=250>

105 MOND – EMERY 1929, 51-52, pl. 37a, Cat. 99 – M: 11 cm

106 JUNKER 1907, 64-65.

107 CT IV,332d, CT IV,335e, CT V,251b, CT VI, 165b, CT VI,324m.

108 JUNKER 1907, 105-.

109 KEES 1941, 165.

110 Metropolitan Museum 20.1.23. 29, see note 29.

It seems thus, that initially, the djed pillar amulet was expected to maintain and ensure durability and permanence in cases of protection provided by other amulets strung together on a piece of jewellery. Before the New Kingdom, it was certainly not given much importance, since only a few are known from these more than mille years, and was used together with other amulets. Its rarity also confirms the assumption that its effect was thought not to be general, covering many things, since it was one amulet among many in the burial assemblages. Its significance grew while it got connected to the Sun God and Osiris, and grew then in parallel with the importance of the god's worship in the cult of the centuries to come. Based on the double-row Amarna period application, it seems that during the New Kingdom both directions were significant. Since Akhenaten wanted to banish the Osiris afterlife imagination from the lives of the Egyptians, its use at that and directly preceding time points to a predominance of the solar aspect. The popularity could have been justified, however, by the double background, as it could be beneficial both for the believers of the traditional Egyptian and the Aton cult. In the Ramesside period, however, the solar character got overshadowed by the Osiris identification, which remained dominant all later times.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study attempted to examine the motivational factors that prompted the museum's founders to acquire these two specific amulets. During the initial phase of the formation of the core collection, in 1963, the volume *The Peasant's Complaints. Ancient Egyptian Short Stories* edited by Aladár Dobrovits was published, introducing Hungarian readers to *The Tale of Khufu and the Magicians*, in the translation by László Kákosy.¹¹¹ Within this narrative, the advanced age and extraordinary abilities attributed to the magician Djedi may be interpreted in etymological and symbolic relation to the djed pillar, an association later subjected to systematic scholarly analysis by Jennifer McKeown in her 2002 study.¹¹² Accordingly, the djed amulet held a particular significance within contemporary Egyptological and popular discourse.

The acquisition was further supported by considerations rooted in the history of science. At approximately the same time as the amulet entered the collection, the papers of Illés Politzer – significant sources for the history of Hungarian medicine – were also incorporated into the collection, likewise acquired from Rudolf Bedő. Through the inclusion of these Egyptian artefacts, the institution presented not only an interest in the history of the medical sciences which was traced back to the ancient Egyptian culture, but also a broader biological and philosophical framework, in which the scarab

111 DOBROVITS 1963.

112 MCKEOWN 2022.

functioned as a symbol of ontogenesis and the origin of life, while the djed pillar represented stability and the terminal phase of life. This framework facilitated the presentation of ancient Egyptian concepts of health and disease.

Within this context, the amulet was also interpretable as an anatomical symbol, specifically as the spinal column of Osiris, thereby establishing a conceptual link between mythological narratives and contemporary morphological knowledge. Finally, the continuous use of the djed pillar over a period of approximately three millennia, together with its semantic transformations, served as a demonstrative example of the complex evolution of attitudes toward life and religious belief systems.

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New York, Metropolitan Museum: <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection>

Berlin, Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung: <https://recherche.smb.museum/?language=de&limit=15&sort=relevance&controls=none>

Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum: <https://fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/explore-our-collection>

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