

Jewellery of Ancient Egypt

1926

Museum in Cairo



**Jewellery of Ancient Egypt
at the
Egyptian Museum in Cairo**

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Front cover : Necklace with an inlaid *Wadjet* (see page 42)

Back cover : Collars were one of the most wide-spread pieces of jewellery in ancient Egypt. It consists of a large number of cylindrical beads, pierced at the flat end and tied together to make up the collar. The outer most row usually consist of large leaf-shaped pendants. Nofert c. 2500 BC wears such a collar. Women continued to wear these collars till the end of pharaonic history 2500 years later. She wears over her wig a coloured diadem with floral motives, showing how the Egyptians loved nature. Diadems were worn by men as well as by women; they were worn since Pre Dynastic times. The eyes inlaid with crystal and outlined with black.

This pair statue, of Nofert and her husband Ra-Hotep was found in a tomb near the Pyramid of Meidum, is regarded as one of the magnificent statues of the Old Kingdom.

Introduction

Jewellery was a milestone in the ancient Egyptian culture. During a person's life it was a symbol of rank and was also a decorative element. It was also used as an amulet with a protective purpose. In the tomb the mummy was covered with jewellery to protect the passage of the deceased to afterlife. The most beautiful pieces of jewellery were found in simple burials that had escaped the continuous dwelling of thieves.

The majority of the jewellery collection in the Cairo Museum comes from the tomb of Tutankhamun discovered by Howard Carter in 1923. The next substantial collection is that of the Middle Kingdom princesses discovered in Dahshur and Fayum. The workmanship of the Middle Kingdom collection is the best of all. Also displayed is a beautiful collection from the reign of Ahmose founder of the 18th Dynasty. There is also the collection of Tanis from the Late Period. In comparison to the previous collection its workmanship is poor. In 1989 the French expedition discovered a gold treasure in Dush at Kharga Oasis, dating to the second century AD. It consists of bracelets, diadem and a pectoral.

The art of making jewellery stems back to pre-history. In the Naqada period c. 3500 BC, precious stones were used to make beads. A beautiful flint knife with a gold handle c. 3500 BC is displayed in the Cairo Museum. The knife has a flint blade and a handle covered with gold leaf. Both sides of the gold leaf are decorated with floral motives.

The attraction of ancient Egyptians to gold is not only of materialistic nature. Gold played a substantial role in the mind of the Egyptian because of its religious mythic and symbolic nature. Due to gold's chemical properties of continuous glance and stability it was associated with gods who had the same attributes. Gold does not make oxides, and after hundreds of years it still shines as if new, hence associated with eternity and became "the flesh of gods". It was for that reason that the Egyptians so heavily employed gold and by all means not out of greediness. Coffin and death masks were made of solid gold because it was "the flesh of gods" and in the dangerous passage to eternity it would protect the deceased. In lifetime gold became also a symbol of might. The pharaoh was the incarnation of the "golden Horus" son of Osiris. His rank was equal to that of the gods.

Gold treasures of the pharaohs give us a clear insight of ancient Egypt, and also of the daily life and the belief of afterlife. Jewellery that survived is a clear evidence of a highly developed art. Funerary jewellery were mostly amulets to protect the deceased from "evil eyes" and from "evil spirits".

The Egyptian word for gold was *nub*, and it referred to the areas where gold was mined at Aswan. The Greek historian Strabo called this region 'Nubia', a name used till today. Silver was called by the Egyptians *nub hedj*, which means 'white gold'. In ancient Egypt there was no independent mining of silver. Gold had a varying percentage of silver. Silver objects were manufactured from silver rich gold. Pure silver was not found in Egypt but was imported and therefore was more valuable than gold. Not many silver objects have survived because it forms oxide and hence by time is ruined beyond recognition.

Pharonic quarries in the Eastern Desert

There is much to be said in regard gold mining in Egypt, but here space does not permit more than a cursory review of the subject. In fact, the gold mines of the Eastern Desert are one of the major causes which made Egypt the richest country in the ancient world. Gold was used in Egypt at a date considerably prior to the beginning of written history in the First Dynasty, and there are much pre-historic objects richly decorated with that metal.

To appreciate fully what the ancient Egyptian endured and achieved in his desert travels it must be remembered that all he had in the way of beasts of burden were donkeys and oxen. The camel was unknown in ancient Egypt, it was brought by the Persians in the seventh century BC. There is no sign of its extensive use as "ship of the desert" during the Roman times. In later times travelling through the desert was done entirely on camel back. It is therefore unfair to judge the ancient Egyptian expeditions into the Desert by the standard of Arab camel caravans. Moreover, throughout the Old Kingdom, expeditions to Sinai had to reckon with hostile bedouins, with the result that the labour needed by the expedition had to go along with it. These conditions improved only for the first time during the Middle Kingdom; but in any case the bedouin are, and always have been, unsuited for regular work.

What especially attracted the inhabitants of the Nile valley to the mountains of the Eastern Desert from the days of predynastic hunters and cattle breeders onwards were the wonderfully coloured hard stones used for arts and crafts, the gold and the semi-precious stones which the primary rocks conceal in their veins. In Wadi Hammamat schist was found, it is a sort of greenery slate which was used for cosmetic palettes in the Pre-dynastic and Early Dynastic periods and which was much favoured by sculptors in the Late Period because of the mirror-like polish it could take.

No permanent settlements existed in the Eastern Desert. The pharaoh organised an expedition to the Eastern Desert "*Rhenu*" only when he was in need for stones. Numerous inscriptions in the mountains of the Eastern Desert give account of their expedition explaining under whose reign did it take place, who was the leader, how many workers participated, the fortunate and unfortunate events that faced the expedition, etc. The oldest inscription dates from Iseki in the 5th Dynasty. Following him were Phious in the 6th Dynasty, Mentuhotep II in the 11th Dynasty. Mentuhotep III sent his Wesir Amenemhat to get him a sarcophagus.

Running the ancient mines necessitated powerful organisations and management skills. One can think of several problems such as: Communication with the Nile valley, continuous supply of food and water for the quarrymen, managing thousands of quarrymen of whom some were slaves, convicts and forced labour, at a single location and then the transport of heavy stone over barren grounds to the Nile valley was a monumental task. For example, in the 6th Dynasty one reads of 200 donkeys and 50 oxen being used in the transport, while in the 11th Dynasty 60,000 loaves of bread formed daily requirements of food in an expedition.

An inscription states that a sarcophagus was carried down to the Nile valley by an army of 3000 soldiers from the Delta, and that sacrifices of cattle, goats and incense were constantly made in order to lighten up the labour. The masons had cut it to an enormous size 4.2 X 2.1 X 1 metre. Two other blocks,

their length measuring 6 and 5 metres, were carried by the same group of soldiers.

In the reign of Amenemhat I, 12th Dynasty, approximately 2000 BC, an officer called Antef was sent to the quarries of Wadi Fowakhir to procure gems, so rare that "there was no hunter who knew the marvel of it." Antef writes an inscription "I spent 8 days, searching the mountains, I knew not the place wherein it might be. I prostrated myself before god Min, the patron of the desert, before Mut the great goddess of magic, before the gods of the highland, burning incense to them upon the fire." At last after almost giving up search, he found the required block one morning just as the sun had shined the dark mountains of the valley.

Various kings of the 19th and 20th Dynasties are mentioned on the rocks; but the only important inscription dates from the second year of the reign of Ramses IV. It seems that this king with a degree of energy unusual in a pharaoh of this debased period, made a personal visit to the quarries. "He led the way to the place he desired; he went around the mountains, he engraved an inscription on the mountains with his great name." This inscription is to be seen on the rocks of the valley of Wadi Hammamat, almost as when the scribes had written it. A complete list of the personnel of the expedition is recorded, and, as it gives an idea of the usual composition of a force of this kind, I may be permitted to give it in some detail.

The head of the expedition was no other than the high priest of Amun, and his immediate staff consisted of the king's butlers, the deputy of the army and his secretary, the overseer of the treasury, two directors of the quarry service, the court charioteer, and the clerk of the army lists. Twenty clerks of the army, and 20 inspectors of the court stables were attached to this group. Under a military commandment there were 20 infantry officers and 500 men, 50 charioteers, 200 sailors, and a body of 50 priests, scribes, overseers and veterinary inspectors. Under a chief quarryman and three master quarrymen were 130 stone cutters. The main work was done by 2000 crown slaves and 800 foreign captives. Two draughtsmen and four sculptors were employed for engraving the inscriptions. A civil magistrate with 50 police kept order among this large force, which altogether totalled 8362 men, not including as the inscription grimly states, the 900 souls who perished from fatigue, hunger, disease or exposure.

The supplies of this large expedition were transported in 10 carts each drawn by six yokes of oxen; and there were many porters laden with bread, meat and various kinds of cakes. The inscription tells us of the sacrifices which were continuously made to the gods of the desert. "These were brought from Thebes for the sacrifices of the gods of heaven and earth. Bulls were slaughtered, calves were smitten, incense streamed to heaven, wine was like a flood. The voice of the ritual priest presented these pure offerings to all the gods of the mountains so that their heart were glad."

In the reign of Ptolemy III, 240 BC., a little temple was built near Bir Fowakhir at the east end of the valley of the quarries. Another temple in the same wadi is dedicated to god Min, the patron of the Eastern Desert. It measures 3,5 X 6 m. The priests of the god could not have commanded the devotion of more than a few quarrymen. Near the temple there are three groups of ruined huts, lying on the hillside amongst the rocks, and here the quarrymen

of the Ptolemaic age dwelt, as the broken pottery indicates. There are many traces of ancient gold workings near by.

In Wadi Fowakhir there are many blocks of stone, addressed to Cæsars, but never dispatched to them. There are many Greek inscriptions to be seen, the majority being grouped together in a recess amidst the rocks on the south side of the valley. Here one reads of quarrymen who worked for Tiberius, Nero, Domitian and other emperors; and there are drawings of men, animals and boats.

Also, in Wady Fowakhir an inscription dating from the 11th Dynasty, 2050 BC., states a story told by a high ranking official called Henu. He recorded his expedition to Punt in the 8th year of the reign of Mentuhotep III. He sent an army of 3000 men, and set from Coptos, first to the little oasis of Laketa. He had much consideration for his men, because he says "I made the road a river, and the desert a stretch of field. I gave a leather bottle, a carrying pole, two jars of water and 20 loaves of bread to each one of the men every day." This means that the army ate daily 60,000 loaves of bread. Therefore, one should have great respect to the organisational power of the ancient Egyptians. At Wady Fowakhir he dug wells and organised some quarrying for the king. Upon the return from the expedition from Punt, also in Wady Fowakhir he organised the transport of five blocks of stone to the Nile valley. They were used for making statues.

An inscription written by Henu reads the following : The king sent me to dispatch a ship to Punt to bring for him the fresh myrrh from the chieftains of the desert. Then I went forth from Coptos upon the road as his Majesty commanded me. Troops cleared the way before me, ... Then I reached the Red Sea, and I built this ship, and I dispatched it with everything, after I had made for it a great offering of cattle, bulls and ibexes.

Henu, no doubt, carried the material for building the vessel across the desert, and settled down on the coast to build it, his supplies being sent to him from Coptos as often as necessary. He tells us in another part of the inscription that he dug several wells in the desert; and one can imagine his little company living quite happily beside one of these wells near the seashore while the vessel was hammered together on the beach below. After the lapse of four thousand years one might still picture these scenes : the launching of the ship into the blue waters, and the shouts of the workmen as they echoed across the sandy beach; the tedious journey along the barren coast, always the yellow hills upon one's right and always the boundless sea upon one's left; the landing on the strange land of Punt, where the precious stone and myrrh was found, bearded men and fat women sat at the door of the huts.

The temple of Wadi Abad. The temple lies on the 250 km track leading from Edfu on the Nile Valley to the Red Sea. It was discovered by the great German archeologist Lepsius. The name bestowed on the temple was Redeseyah, a small unknown village in the Nile valley, 60 km away from the temple. Redeseyah seems to have been the point from which Lepsius started the expedition to the temple.

The temple was built by King Sety I, to the benefit of the minors working in the neighbourhood. There are numerous gold mines in the region, so one cannot decide which were Sety's mines. It is a rock-cut temple, and its entrance was sealed with bricks in 1968, therefore, it is impossible to enter inside. However, a description from the beginning of the 20th century states

that it is one of the most beautiful and one of the best preserved temples of ancient Egypt.

It might be asked why did Sety I select this location to built his temple. One obvious reason is that it lies among the routes to the mines. Other reasons are not so apparent. However, an explanation might be that the rock with its smooth surface on its northern side, had offered a welcome shadow to earlier travellers. Here on the rocks there are many drawings dating from archaic or even prehistoric times. Numerous representations of curious boats are seen. In the majority of boats one sees the shrine which contained the god. In one of these figures an animal is being sacrificed in front of god Min himself, the patron of the desert. Since archaic times this rock became a place to rest and to dream in. It became a sort of sacred place in which man bowed before the arc of Min. Inscriptions are lacking till the 18th Dynasty. Amenhotep III sent his Viceroy, Merimes, to this place. His name is written on the rocks near the temple. His temple at el-Kab at the beginning of the route is a further indication of his interest in the gold working of this area. Just as this king has built his temple near the sacred rock at "the mouth of wilderness", so Sety half a century later erected his shrine at the foot of this more remote sacred rock. This place was just about a day's ride from Edfu or el-Kab, its situation was convenient. Moreover, there was no other head or rock in its neighbourhood which offered such a fine position for a rock temple.

In the inscription near the mouth of the excavated portion of this shrine, Sety recorded the story of building the temple. It might be of interest to the reader, therefore quoted here :

In year 9, the third month of the third season, the twentieth day. Lo ! His majesty inspected the hill country so far as the regions of the mountains, for his heart desired to see the mines from which the gold is brought. Now when his majesty has had gone out from the Nile Valley, he made a halt on the road, in order to take council with his heart; and he said, "How evil is the way without water ! It is so for a traveller whose mouth is parched. How shall his throat be cooled, how shall he quench his thirst ? for the lowland is so far away, and the highland is vast. The thirsty man cries out to himself against a fatal country. "Make haste ! let me take counsel to their needs. I shall make for them a supply for preserving them alive, so that they thank god in my name after years." Now after his majesty had spoken these words in his own heart, he coursed through the desert seeking a place to make a water station; and lo ! the god led him in order to grant the request which he desired. Then were commanded quartermen to dig a well upon the desert. Then this place was built in the great name of Sety, and the water flowed into it in very great quantity. Said his majesty, "Behold, the god has granted my petition, and he has brought me water upon the desert. Since the days of the gods the way has been dangerous, but it has been pleasant in my glorious reign. Another good thought has come to my heart, a command of the god, even the equipment of a town, in whose midst shall be a settlement with a temple. I will build a resting place on this spot, in the great name of my fathers the gods. May they grant that what I have wrought shall abide, and that memory shall prosper, circulating through the hill country." Then his majesty commanded that the leader of the king's workmen be commissioned, and with him the quarrymen, then there should be made by excavation in the mountain this temple. Now after the stronghold was completed and adorned, and its paintings executed, his majesty came to worship his fathers, all the gods; and he said, "Praise to you, O great gods ! May ye favour me forever, may ye establish my name eternally. As I have been useful to you, as I have been watchful for the things which ye desire, may ye speak to those who are still to come, whether kings, princes, or people, for they may establish for me my work in this place, on behalf of my beautiful temple in Abydos."

Gold mining in Roman times. This account of gold mining was given by Diodrus, who obtained his information from Agatharcides (Wolek D., Agatharcides von Kindos: Über das Rote Meer, Bamberg, 1966), of the mines which are situated in the Eastern Desert.

Persons who worked the mines were mainly criminals and prisoners of war; but with these there were unjustly accused men, and those who had by some political action earned the Emperor's anger. Frequently this class of prisoner was sent to the mines, together with all the members of his family, and these were obliged to labour for the emperor's profit. No distinction were made at the mines between the classes, but all suffered together, and all were weight down with leash by night and day. There was little or no chance of escape, for watchmen were placed on every hill top, and the soldiers were ready to chase through the arid desert anyone who escaped the watch-men. These soldiers were all foreigners, and with very small chance they understand the language of the prisoners; and thus were hardly ever able to be bought off.

The work was carried continuously day after day, and constantly the labourers were under the eyes of ruthless watchers. In order to minimize the expenses, no cloth were supplied for the prisoners, and they possessed only a small rug to hide their nakedness. Nor were they allowed to give a moment's time to bathing or care of their bodies. Whenever in good or bad health, outraged to work; and neither the feeble, old age, the fever or sickness, nor the discomfort of women were regarded as proper reasons for inactivity even for an hour. Thus the fate of a man who had been deported to these mines was always the same : tied up and unwashed, covered with surface injuries everywhere. He dropped dead in his chains under the stroke of the whip. The sufferings of life were such that death was received with joy, and it was the dying alone who possessed a single thought of happiness.

Those of us who have seen these mines know the coldness of winter nights and the intense heat of summer days, they will alone realise what agony these people must have suffered.

The rock from which the gold was obtained, says Diodrus, was very hard, but the miners softened it by lighting fire underneath, after which it could be broken by hand. When it was thus prepared the strongest of the men were set to break it with iron tools, while the supervisor addressed their work towards the veins of gold. The galleries following the veins, twisted and turned, so that at a depth of a few metres there was no glimmer of daylight; and therefore, the miners carried a small fire. After the blocks were broken they were carried to the surface by the children of the captives. These fragments were then gathered and pounded until the ore was broken into pieces of size of peas. The ore was then handed over to women and old men, who placed it in hand-mills, and thus ground it to powder. This powder was then placed upon a sloping surface, and a stream of water was poured over it which carried away the particles of stone but left the gold in position. This process of washing was repeated several times, until all impurities were eliminated and the gold dust became pure and bright. Other workmen then took the dust, and after measuring it carefully, they poured it into an earth-ware crucible, and having added a small quantity of lead, and placed it in a furnace for five days. At the end of this period the crucible was sent aside to cool, and on removing the lid, it was found to contain pure gold ready to be sent to the treasury.

To give account to the accuracy of this description one sometimes finds hand-mills lying amidst the ruins of old mining settlements.

Practically nothing is known by the methods employed by the ancient Egyptians in earlier days, but they cannot have differed greatly from those of the Roman period. There seems reason to suppose that less cruelty existed in dynastic times than in the days of the heartless Romans; and in a previous section an account was given of a temple and a well built by King Sety I for the benefit of the persons who were involved in gold-mining.

The Papyrus of Turin : The oldest geological and topographical map in history

An account of the gold mining in ancient Egypt is never fulfilled without mentioning the Papyrus of Turin. The oldest geographical and geological map is illustrated on this papyrus. It is estimated to be 3500 years old. The Papyrus is now in the Egyptian Museum in Turin.

The Papyrus was mentioned by Lepsius ("Auswahl von Urkunden des ägyptischen Alterthums" Plate XXII) in 1842. The thought wrongly that this map illustrates the tomb of Sety I in the Valley of the Kings, Thebes. The tomb of Sety I was discovered in 1817 by the Italian Giovanni Battista Belzoni (1778 - 1823). After many decades when it became possible to read the hieratic inscription in the Papyrus, the Egyptologists found that this manuscript gives a plan of the gold mines, settlements, and tracks in a region between the Red Sea and the Nile valley.

It is unknown where and when this Papyrus was found. It is only known who was the first to mention it and how it reached Turin. One of the enthusiastic collectors of Egyptian antiquities was the Piemontese Bernardino Drovetti (1776 - 1852).¹ In 1824 Drovetti sold his collection including the Papyrus of Turin, to Carlo Felice the King of Piedmont and Sardinia. He paid for the whole collection 400 000.- gold Francs. The king whose residence at that time was Turin gave the whole collection as a present to the town Turin.

1 Bernardino Drovetti served as a colonel in the 1798 French expedition, and during fierce fighting, he had saved the life of Napoleon's future brother-in-law, Joachim Murat. In 1803 he returned to Egypt and was appointed vice consul of France, in 1810 he became general consul. During these years he came into contact with Mohammed Aly, the viceroy of Egypt. When Louis XVIII ascended to the throne in 1814, Drovetti was sacked, but he stayed in Egypt. He pursued his lucrative career as a trader of antiquities, thanks to Mohammed Aly's protection. In 1820 Drovetti was reappointed as consul-general, remaining in that position till 1829.

Drovetti participated very actively in search for antiquities and personally directed excavation work, but it was his unscrupulous agents with guaranteed impunity by the firman, who were responsible for the most shameless looting. One of his most highly skilled agents was Jean-Jackues Rifaud a sculptor from Marseilles who spent 40 years in

The town established for this collection the Museum Egizio in the Palazzo dell'Accademia delle Scienze. It took the new museum many decades to discover all the treasures from Drovetti's collection. Lepsius was the first to be interested in the Papyrus and also was the first to mention it. He restored part of the Papyrus which is now known as Papyrus I or the "gold mine papyrus". It measures 48 X 42 cm. In the 1850's and 60's the hieratic text on the edge of the inscription was translated. On that basis it became clear that the area mentioned was mountainous and had many gold mines, temples, streets and settlements, and the conclusion was that it must have been somewhere in the Eastern Desert. They thought that most likely it must have been the gold mines of Wady Alaki, which were discovered by Linant De Bellefonds. In 1868, this interpretation was rejected, when additional fragments were collected and designated as Papyrus II. A detailed account was given by Lauth² in 1870 and 1871. Gardiner³ in 1914 was the first to discover that the map covers the area of Wady Hammamat along the Coptos - Qosseir caravan route. He pointed to the caravan route on the map. The hills (Papyrus I) which contain gold, are coloured in red.

The overall length of the Papyrus is 270 cm, and its width 42 cm. The description of the map according to the museum of Turin is the following : Map of the gold mines in Wady Fowakhir. Hills denoted red contain gold. Mining village containing a well and a temple dedicated to Sety I lies in the vicinity of the mountain denoted in red. South is up, east is left and west is right hand side. All tracks on to the left lead up to Qosseir, and all tracks to the right lead to Coptos. The folding of the Papyrus starts from its left side. The scale is not constant throughout the map from left to right. It increases towards the right side.

Text on the map include the following : number 11 "Mountains from where gold is mined are marked in red", number 4 & 5 "mountains of gold"; several lines are drawn on the gold hill No. 5. Number 12 "gold and silver mountain"; It is strange to mention silver. According to Goyon there is an ancient mining centre in Gebel el-Sid, a few kms south-east of Wady

Egypt, and he had a habit of engraving his name, in splendid letterings, on Egyptian statues he procured for Drovetti.

The antiquies were piled up in courtyards of the French consulate. When he decided he had enough, Drovetti tried to persuade Louis XVIII to purchase antiquities for the Louvre. The deal was not completed because the king offered a low price. Finally in 1824 the collection was sold to the King of Sardinia.

Satisfied with the results of his first commercial venture, Drovetti continued his excavation and brought together a second collection which he sold to the Louvre. Drovetti assembled a third collection which he sold in 1836 to the king of Prussia.

2 F. J. Lauth, Die älteste Landkarte nubischer Goldminen, in : Sitzungsberichte, Kgl. Bayer. Akad. D. Wissenschaft, Munich, 1870, II page 337.

3 The map of the gold mines in a Ramesside Papyrus at Turin, Cairo Scientific Journal, VIII, 1914, page 41.

Hammamat, its gold is rich in silver. However, Egypt is unknown for silver. The ancient Egyptians knew metallurgically how to separate gold from silver. In some epochs of the ancient Egyptian history silver was regarded more precious than gold.

Gold and foreign Relations

The Egyptians were never a conquering people like the Hitites, the Assyrians, the Persians or the Arabs. In remote antiquity they gained their home-land by colonization rather than by conquest. In historical times they crossed their borders in search of raw materials that they lacked. Their approach to international relations was coloured by this point of view. The Egyptian preferred to obtain what he wanted by trading rather than by permanent military occupation. For example, Egypt lacked timber and in consequence links were built up with the Phoenician coast in order to obtain pinewood from Lebanon. Without this timber it would have been impossible for the Egyptians to construct the vast wood structures in the royal tombs, the royal palaces, coffin for mummies, ships, or even the tall flag-stuffs rising up in front of the pylons of the temples of the New Kingdom. The Near East supplied Egypt with other raw materials also. Asiatic copper is mentioned several times since the Old Kingdom. Egypt possessed only small deposits of copper-ore and then mostly mixed with malachite.

To pay for these imported metals Egypt had especially the gold from her mines; and the possession of these mines, more than any military power, assured Egypt up to the Amarna Period unchallenged superiority as the richest country in the ancient world. This superiority extended much further than the immediate sphere of direct influence which at that time went as far as north Syria. We learn of the foreign correspondence of Amenhotep III and Akhenaten the effect produced by the wealth of the Egyptian court upon both friends and rivals among the powerful Asiatic kings. The request of gold from Egypt is repeated time and again by Mitanni, Ashur and Babylon: 'My brother will please send me much beautiful gold that I can use for my work'. Again, Tushratta of Mitanni wrote to his son in law Amenhotep III: 'My brother, send gold in very great quantities; such as cannot be counted; my brother may send me that; and my brother may send me more gold than my father got. In the land of my brother is not gold as dust upon the ground?'

When the Egyptian kings from Tuthmosis IV onwards became tired of marching their armies into Asia and of fighting always the same opponent, gold became the instrument of power politics and allies were bought over with it in Asia. This policy of alliances broke down, however, during the last years of Amenhotep III due to selfishness displayed by Egypt's princely neighbours under the pressure of the Hittite invasion of northern Syria. The process of disruption was furthered by the bad diplomacy of the sun-king Akhenaten. Egypt's old allies now complained bitterly of Egyptian negligence. During the Amarna period there was still enough gold in the treasury in spite of bad administration. This fact is confirmed by looking at the gold found in the tomb of Tutankhamun. On the other side of the picture, however, many of the Asiatic states had prospered exceedingly due to the trade with Egypt.

Precious stones and metals

Other types of semi-precious stone obtained from the Eastern Desert was felspar, onyx, agates, jasper, rock-crystal, amethysts, turquoises and cornelians. Stones like steatite and turquoise were used as early as the Naqada period, and such use presupposes the beginnings of an extensive system of barter. The favourite coloured stone used by the Egyptians were green turquoise, dull-red cornelian and blue lapis-lazuli, but the last had at all periods, to be obtained by barter from abroad. It came from Asia. Green stone and turquoise came from the Eastern Desert and from Sinai; cornelian and other reddish stones were found in the neighbourhood of the First Cataract in Aswan, while the violet-coloured amethyst was found in the Nubian desert. Pharaonic Egypt made no use of several stones among those most highly valued today, although found within her borders, such as the precious emerald and the transparent many-coloured beryl. The former is found in Gebel Zabrah known as Samargadus Mons; the latter in the mountains by the Red Sea. Their beauty was first appreciated in the classical period.

Silver, the second precious metal, which the Egyptians extracted from the same veins of quartz of the primary rock from which they obtained gold, came chiefly from the south-east corner of the Eastern Desert; it was also imported in large quantities from the Near East. We learn this fact indirectly from its economic value. In the Old Kingdom silver was regarded as a white kind of gold. It was valued more highly than gold proper or the well-known mixture of silver and gold that the ancients called electrum.

Symbolism. The ancient Egyptians were very much oriented to use symbolic notions. It was through symbols that the Egyptians represented and affirmed many of their ideas and beliefs regarding life and faith. Symbols often depict aspects of reality that are difficult to represent otherwise. Jewellery was in a way a symbolic expression of religious beliefs. Yet the constant incorporation of symbols was not merely a matter of decoration but it was an expression of underlying religious or magical beliefs that gave the piece life, meaning and power.

Colour. This was one of the most important aspects of Egyptian symbolism and is the underlying reason for the symbolic associations of many materials. Individual colours could mean various things according to their application. Red, the colour of blood, could symbolise fire, blood, the sun, and the abstract concept of life and destruction associated with them. Blue symbolised heavens and water. Yellow, a primary solar colour, was used extensively for solar related objects. Although black was the colour of the netherworld, it was the symbol of fertility because it was the colour of the rich black earth of the Nile valley. Green, the colour of luxuriant vegetation and hence life symbolised health and vitality. White was used as a symbol of purity. In some cases white was used instead of yellow in denoting solar colour.

According to our modern definition the Egyptians employed only semi-precious stone. No precious stones were used. They also used coloured glass they had manufactured to imitate semi-precious stones. The choice of stone and hence colour combinations had a symbolic and an amuletic significance.

Green. This colour was associated with vegetation, fertility and resurrection. Malachite was the main source of green stone. The pigments of painting

were also obtained from malachite. Turquoise was another major stone used for green. Other stones used were jasper, green feldspar, beryl and peridot. Peridot was mined from St. John's island in the Red Sea 60 km off Ras Banas. Malachite was mined from Wady Maghara and Serabit el-Khadim in Sinai.

Dark Blue. Dark blue was the colour of the night sky. The stone used was the lapis-lazuli. This stone is not mined in Egypt, it was imported from north east Afghanistan, and hence was the most expensive of the gems. Its value was placed immediately after gold and silver. It was often imitated by coloured glass. Lapis-lazuli was used from the Predynastic Period till the Late Period. It was often listed as tribute by the subjects in Syria, Palestine, Babylon and Sudan.

Red. Red was a symbol of blood, energy and hence life. It was also the colour of the wicked god Seth and of the desert and mountain land, that is all regions outside the Nile valley. The stones used here were red jasper and cornelian.

Glass. The Egyptians manufactured glass by melting calcium silicate. However, the process of blowing glass was unknown, it was invented in the Roman Period. They manufactured rods of glass in moulds from which they made beads, amulets, pendants and inlays. Moulds of metal with a central rod which was then withdrawn was used for beads. Beads were known from the time of the Old Kingdom, but glass was produced in large quantities only in the New Kingdom. Depending on the colour cast added, glass might be blue, green, red or yellow, less often white or black. Its appearance was similar to semi-precious stone which was much harder and more difficult to carve. Therefore, in the New Kingdom it substituted semi-precious stones in beads and inlays. In earlier periods these were made from lapis-lazuli, turquoise, feldspar and cornelian. In fact most of Tutankhamun's jewellery consist of precious metal settings for glass elements. Coloured glass was invented in Egypt during the 18th Dynasty. Beads, amulets, earrings and finger rings were made out of glass.

All semi precious stones could be imitated by like-coloured glass or glazed compositions or even paint. Although a particular amulet's material might have been specified in texts, almost any material, as long as its colour was appropriate to the symbolism could be used.

Ivory and bone. Since the Pre-Dynastic Period ivory and bone was carved into finger rings, beads, amulets and statues. The Greeks named Egypt's southern most town Elephantine because to it were brought luxury goods from the south. These were panther skins, gold, incense, ebony and elephant tusks.

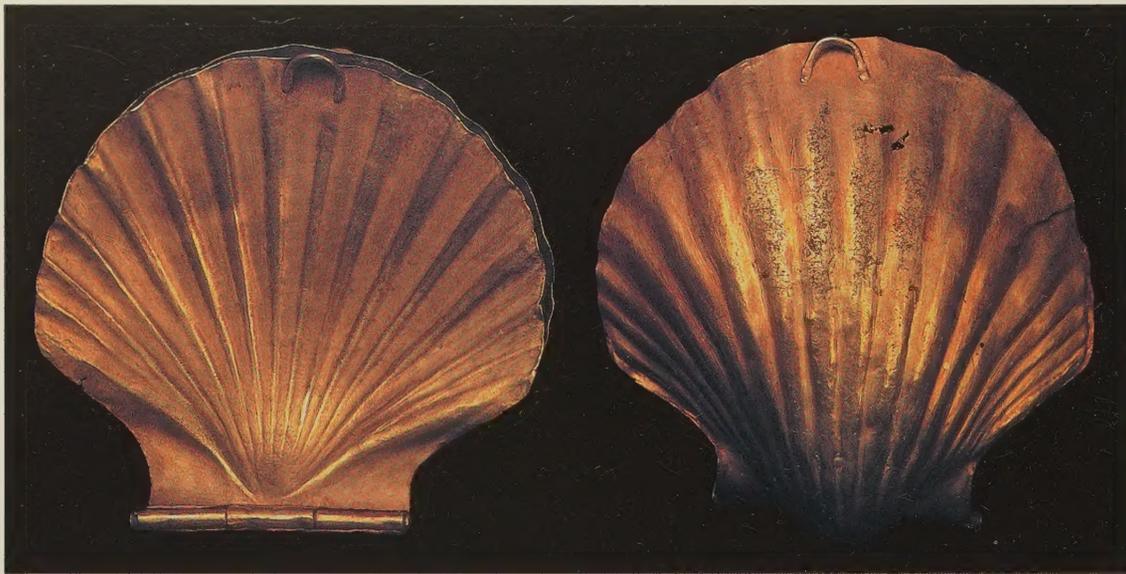
Amulets and Jewellery. Amulets and jewellery were worn by all social classes of ancient Egyptians. Royals were always depicted wearing amulets. The correct translation of the word "amulet" stems from the verb "to guard" or "to protect", indicating that the main purpose was to provide magical protection. The jewellery's shape, the material from which it was made, and its colour were vital to its amuletic meaning. Many types of material, precious metal, semi-precious stones, glazed composition, glass and organic matter were used to make jewellery and most had an underlying symbolism. Gold represented the sun with all its inherent life promoting characteristics including daily renewal. Silver was the colour of the moon.

The division between amulets carried in life time and funerary amulets is a difficult task. Amulets worn in life for their "guarding" and "magic" properties could also be taken to the tomb for the same purpose. However, funerary amulets were made only to be carried in the tomb. They were carried by the mummy to give aid and protection during the rather dangerous journey to afterlife. The "Book of the Dead" describes some funerary amulets. The book itself was put in the tomb to act as an amulet, because its spells were aimed to assist the deceased to reach the netherworld and be judged among the blessed.

Amulets mainly in the form of animals were found dating to 1500 years prior to the First Dynasty. They were found in tombs, and their main purpose was to act as a magical power to the living and were taken to the tomb subsequently. For example, the hippopotamus was worn upside down, was meant to drive away evil spirit. Here the idea was to ward off dangerous and evil spirits by its very representation. In ancient Egypt the male hippopotamus was a symbol evil and wickedness and hence associated with god Seth. The reason for that link was because the male hippopotamus was a savage animal known to attack cattle and ruin farming fields. A standing female hippopotamus depicted Taweret goddess of childbirth. Amulets in the form of heads of dog, bull, panther, lion or gazelle were also used. But in this case the idea was to take the animal's particular qualities to the person who carries the amulet by sympathetic magic. The dog would be represented because of his swiftness, the lion for his strength and speed. A horned cow's head represented goddess Hathor as the archetypal mother, and the vulture symbolized Nekhbet. Sea shells and birds' claws were also used as amulets in the Pre-Dynastic Period. In the pharaonic period the same forms were also used, however, made of other material. The fly amulet stems from the Pre-Dynastic Period and was used throughout the pharaonic era. Its purpose in the Pre-Dynastic Period is unclear to us. It could give the person who carries it the strong reproductive characteristic of flies. In the New Kingdom the fly amulet was made of gold. Here the fly was regarded as a sort of royal award, specially for bravery in the field. May be the reason was for the fly's habit for attacking its enemy.

The scarab is the most famous amulet of ancient Egypt. Its first appearance was in the 6th Dynasty. First it was uninscribed, then in the Middle Kingdom it was used as a seal. The scarab *khepri* symbolised resurrection and represented the early morning form of the sun god Ra. The association of the beetle *khepri* and the sun god Ra was because of the regeneration capacity of the former. The Egyptians observed that the scarab beetle laid its eggs in dung and then pushed it around on the ground until it became ball-shaped and the larva were born. Then the dung was associated with the sun, it emitted heat, was ball-shaped and had also a life giving characteristic. Then they portrayed the sun being pushed across the sky by a giant beetle. This image became associated with 'death', because the beetle died, and rebirth because of the emergence of the larva. The beetle was regarded to be in the act of creating itself anew.

The scarab was often made of stone or glass, and often decorated with designs incorporating the hieroglyphs of the king. The funerary type of scarab was made of blue faience.



Shell shaped container (*above*)

Gold, diameter 5.3 cm, 3rd Dynasty, reign of Sekhemhet 2649 - 2643 BC., Upper floor, room 4.

This shell is made of solid gold. It demonstrates the simplicity of art in the Old Kingdom. This piece was discovered among other treasures in Sekhemhet's Step Pyramid in Sakkara. In the late 1940's the Egyptian archeologist Zakaria Ghoneim working in Sakkara was fascinated by a rectangular shaped sand dune, not far from Djoser's Step Pyramid. He started excavating the corners of the dune. To his surprise he was able in 1950 to discover a previously unknown Pyramid complex. From the shape of the pyramid, it was sure that it was an unfinished Step Pyramid belonging to the Third Dynasty. An inscription was found on the perimeter wall that included Imhotep's name. If Imhotep was the builder of this complex, then it must have belonged to Djoser's immediate successor. The pyramid measures approximately 115 X 115 m, it has been calculated when complete its height must have been 70 m. Ghoneim discovered in front of the north wall a tunnel that leads to the inside of the pyramid. Inside the pyramid he discovered 700 stone vessels and a gold treasure from the Third Dynasty, which consists of 21 bracelets, a gold shell and faience coral covered with gold leaf.

Head of a falcon

Gold and obsidian, H. 37.5 cm, Hierakonpolis, 6th Dynasty c. 2350 BC., Upper floor, room 4.

This magnificent piece was discovered by Quibell in 1897. It was part of a bronze statue of the falcon god Horus of Nekhen. The head is chiselled from a single piece of gold. The beak is a second piece of gold that had been soldered into the head. The eyes are not made of two pieces of stones as one would imagine but of a single rod of obsidian. The curvature of both ends is polished in such a way to resemble the ferocious stare of a bird of prey. The crown and *wraeus* are fixed with rivets to the head. It is possible that the crown and *wraeus* were part of an interchangeable ornament that were surmounting the cult statue according to different events. Other crowns could include the solar disk, the White Crown, the Blue Crown, or the *atef* Crown. The body of the falcon is made of copper, and the head was fixed to the body with copper rivets.



Diadem of Sat-hor-Iwnit

Gold, lapis-lazuli, cornelian, height 44 cm, Lahun, 11th Dynasty, reign of Amenemhat III. 1842 - 1797 BC., Upper floor, room 4.

The diadem of Sat-hor-Iwnit consists of wide band of gold, adorned with 15 inlaid gold discs attached by pegs. Each gold disc has a flower cross shape inlaid with cornelian and blue and green glazed material. A detachable *uraeus* with lapis-lazuli head is placed on the front side of the diadem. A double sheet of gold hangs downward from the discs at the back and the sides. A fourth double sheet pointing upwards is placed on an open papyrus head which is soldered at the back of the diadem.

In the Middle Kingdom it was the tradition to bury princesses in shaft tombs next to their father's pyramid. Many of these simple tombs escaped the dwelling of thieves, and therefore, magnificent jewellery was discovered there.

Flinders Petrie discovered this tomb in 1914. Inside the tomb he found a red granite sarcophagus and canopic jars. Then he found a niche in the wall that had been covered with plaster. Inside were five boxes that contained Sat-hor-Iwnit's jewellery. The treasure consists of a diadem, a pectoral with the name of her father Senusert II, another pectoral of her nephew Amenemhat III during whose reign she died. The toilet pieces are magnificent as the jewellery. These contained black vases for oil and ointments and the mirror displayed in page 12 which is a masterpiece.



Mirror of Sat-hor-Iwnit

Gold, silver, obsidian, height 28 cm, Lahun, 12th Dynasty, reign of Amenemhat III. 1842 - 1797 BC., Upper floor, room 4.

Sat-Hathor-Iwnit was a daughter of Senusert II who probably lived into the reign of Amenemhat III since his name appears on one of her pectorals.

The mirror formed a very important element in a woman's beauty box. The idea of the mirror came from the observation of one's reflection in water and dates back to prehistory according to Egyptian literary sources. In the Old Kingdom, we start to notice mirrors on mastaba walls as part of the funerary equipment and we see girls holding mirrors. In hieroglyphics, it was called *wpt-hr* or "the opener of the face". Some other hieroglyphic names reveal its magical and mythological content. It was for instance called *ankh* or "life" as if the viewer's reflection had its own life behind the disk. The mirror's round shape resembles the solar disk, *in*, by which it was also designated. In the papyrus of *Ipwr* that narrates the events and the chaos of the social revolution that engulfed the country at the end of the Old Kingdom, the author laments the state of the country and reports that the commoners profaned the pyramids and plundered the rich. A poor woman who had previously looked at herself in a pot of water could now, thanks to the revolution, look at herself in the upper class symbol that was the mirror.

This mirror's disk is made of silver and electrum and was originally finely polished but has turned grey with time. Its lotus-shaped handle is covered with obsidian, *mnw-km*, that was brought from Ethiopia. The mirror's handle was called *hm* in ancient Egyptian and it therefore stood for that bilateral hieroglyph. The top of the handle is adorned by a Hathoric head represented by a woman's face with cow's ears. A specially consecrated type of mirror was used in a dance performed to Hathor, the goddess of joy, love and happiness. In the Ptolemaic period, the mirror was incorporated into the daily temple liturgy. Ptolemaic kings used to offer the solar disk in rituals to the goddesses Hathor and Isis.



Pectoral with the name of Senusert II

Gold, turquoise, cornelian, height 4.9 cm, Dahshur, 12th Dynasty, reign of Senusert II. 1897 - 1878 BC., Upper floor, room 4.

A pectoral belonging to princess Sat-Hathor. It was dedicated to her by King Senusert II who may have been her father. Her tomb is situated to the north of Senusert III's pyramid at Dahshur. This magnificent pectoral which is typical of the 12th Dynasty was found in Sat-Hathor's treasury. It is made of openwork cloisonné with semi-precious stone inlays. Its motive is a pylon-shaped kiosk framed at the top by an Egyptian cavetto cornice. The materials used are cornelian, turquoise and lapis-lazuli. The mirror-symmetric scene within is centred around a cartouche with the king's praenomen, *Khakheperre*, "the soul of Ra comes into being" and, above it, Senusert II's "Golden Horus name" *Ntrw m Htp* ("The gods are satisfied") which is composed of three *ntrw* flag signs that stand for "gods" and the sign *htp* which means "peace" or "satisfied".

The significance of the Golden Horus name has not yet been elucidated with certainty. It is thought to symbolize the king's divinity which is unchanging like gold and to refer to the appearance of the rising sun. Alternatively, it has been linked to the god Seth as his epithet, *nbtwy*, means the one of the "golden town" (on the site of modern Naqada). The pectoral's falcons perched on the gold signs both correspond to the hieroglyphic writing of the title which appears in the Middle Kingdom inscriptions and may then have been understood as "the Horus made of gold". Each falcon is wearing the Double Crown of Upper and Lower Egypt. Behind them, we observe two *uraeus* from whose coils hang *ankh* signs.



The diadem of Khnumit

Gold, semi-precious stones, circumference 64 cm, 12th Dynasty, reign of Amenemhat II. 1929 - 1895 BC.,⁴ Upper floor, room 4.

The princesses of the 12th Dynasty were buried in shaft tombs with precious jewellery. Fortunately some of these treasures have remained safe from thieves' hands, maybe because the precious objects used to be kept more discreetly in secondary tombs. Headdresses were originally made of branches and flowers or of cloth to hold the hair when working and also served as an ornament. These would have later been imitated in gold or silver for the aristocracy. False hair, short wigs and even tresses made of wool were also worn over the real hair. A quotation from Egyptian literature says : "My heart does not think but of your love, I run towards you with my untidy hair, but I'll fix it and be ready at any moment".

There are great similarities between this diadem and the one worn by princess Nofert in the famous 4th Dynasty statue with her husband, prince Ra-hotep. The ancient Egyptians attributed specific names to the different types of headdresses. There is the *nfr hat*, a round diadem which is closed with a clip like the present one, the *sshd* or *mdjh* which was an open headdress attached by two strings like princess Nofert's.

This crown was made in the royal workshop at the beginning of 12th Dynasty. It bears the motive of Nekhbet, the goddess whose role was to protect queens and royal mothers which leads us to think that princess Khnumit was later in life crowned as a queen. This idea is confirmed by the writing of the word mother *mwt* with the hieroglyph of the female vulture or goddess Nekhbet. Khnumit was buried beside the pyramid of Amenemhat II, in Dahshur.

The diadem itself is composed of eight units made up of a Rosetta motive surrounded by three lotus flowers, two horizontally and one vertically, repeated eight times. At the front, the goddess Nekhbet as a female vulture with her deployed wings forms an arch bridge . The diadem is decorated at the back with a long golden tube carrying rosette flowers and leaves. According to some opinions it represents a rush plant which was a motto or sign for hunters in Archaic times.

The Rosetta flower or open lotus often decorated women's heads. Some art historians see an open lotus in the central flower and closed ones in the two lateral ones. At the back there is a fastening for the crown made of copper and polished with gold.

Women are shown with diadems made out of plants or flowers during the hunt in Delta marshes. These are mainly associated with fertility and rebirth in the afterlife.

The gold used to produce this diadem was brought from *Wawat* in Nubia and the Sudan. The red cornelian used to incrust the central flower of the Rosetta and lotus leaves was mined in the Eastern Desert or *hrst* in ancient Egyptian and the opaque blue or light blue lapis-lazuli came to Egypt from Afghanistan through trade with Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia and Phoenicia. It was referred to as *khsbdj* in hieroglyphic. The turquoise stone *mfskat* was mined in the region of Serabit el-Khadem in Sinai.

The cloisonné technique was used in the production of this delicate diadem with semi-precious stones inlaid in gold. The main motive of the diadem is the rosette composed of a hemisphere of cornelian surrounded by 14 turquoise petals supported by branches of lapis-lazuli. The inner part of the diadem was made of gold and chased to imitate the front decoration.

The jewellery of the queens and princesses of the Middle Kingdom were distinctive markers of rank and of the social status of their wearer.

Another great cache of treasures of Khnumit's father, King Amenemhat II, was found in el-Tod, south of Luxor. It contained boxes, silver cups, cylinder seals and amulets from Mesopotamia. All that can tell us the wealth and refinement of arts and crafts during his reign.



Pectoral of Senusert III

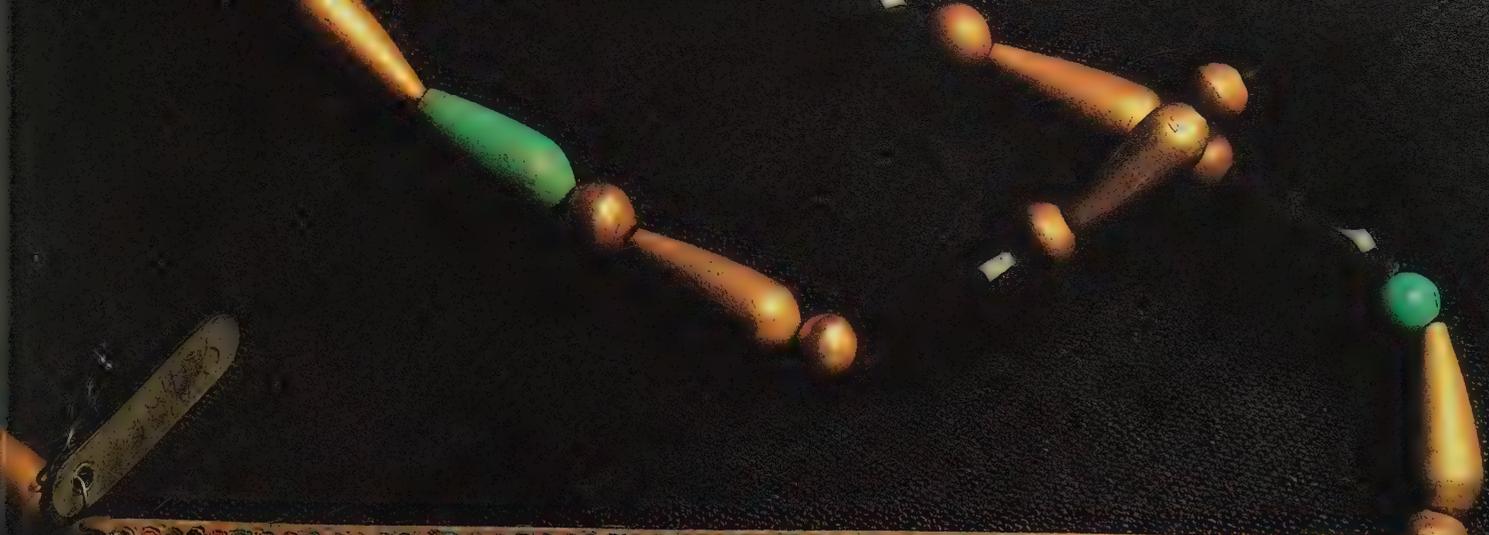
Gold, lapis-lazuli, turquoise, cornelian, height 6.1 cm, Dahshur, 12th Dynasty, reign of Senusert III. 1878 - 1841 BC., Upper floor, room 4.

This pectoral was one of the two famous ones found in Princess Meret's mud-brick tomb in Dahshur, close to the pyramid of her father, Senusert III. It is composed of a shrine motive at the top of which hovers the goddess Nekhbet deploying her wings as a gesture of protection for the king. In each claw, she holds the sign of eternity or infinity, the *shen*, which lent its shape to the cartouche. The king is represented twice in the form of a griffin who is crushing his enemies in a mirror-symmetric image. He is seizing one by the forelock and is trampling the other. The cartouche frames king Senusert's throne name *Kha-kaw-Ra* which means "may the *ka* of Ra shine". Each side of the composition is decorated with two lotuses, one raised and the other inclined over the king as if to protect him and give him a new birth.

The griffin is a mythical creature which brings together a falcon's head and a lion's body thus combining the power of the falcon god Horus, whom the king personified on earth, and the strength of the lion, which was also a representation of the god Atum. The two feathers and horns of the griffin's headdress may refer to the god Amun. Its forehead is decorated with the usual royal cobra *uraeus*.

Egyptian art has represented the king as a griffin since prehistory. In the palettes of the unification period, he is also shown as a lion devouring his enemies and Egyptian literature has often compared him to this animal by virtue of his power and hostility toward his enemies. The theme of the king smiting his enemies is traditional and therefore very common.

The policies of King Senusert III ensured peace in the country. He also led several campaigns against Nubia to secure the southern border against the infiltration of the Africans into Egypt as well as to protect the caravan trade route of Darb el-Arbain from Upper Egypt to Sudan.



Girdle of Meret

Gold, amethyst, length 60 cm, Dahshur, 12th Dynasty, reign of Senusert III. 1878 - 1841 BC., Upper floor, room 4.

This girdle belonged to Princess Meret and was found in the funerary complex of the 12th Dynasty king Senusert III. It was de Morgan who discovered the two jewellery caches of the princesses Sat-Hathor and Meret amongst the funerary equipment of eight royal women.

First used by men, the girdle (*bysaw* in hieroglyphs) was later adopted by women and was worn in everyday life. It was also placed in the tomb to protect the lower part of the body of its wearer in the afterlife like the other amulets which were positioned on the mummy to protect the body parts where they were fixed. The sound made whilst walking with it produced a magic effect or *heka* that could frighten even the gods. The importance of magic in the daily life of the pharaohs has been confirmed by the recent discovery of a Middle Kingdom magician's box in a tomb at the Ramesseum. It provided us with some materials and texts used in magic techniques such as dolls, divine figures, human hair, amulets, hymns and funerary rites. Most commonly, magic was used to remain sound in daily life and in the netherworld, and involved amulets and rituals.

Several types of girdles were in fashion during Meret's time. A popular style for women consisted of imitation cowrie shells connected by a chain of acacia-shaped beads.

This one is composed of nine double leopard heads made of gold. They represented a protective force as the leopard was one of the solar god Ra's animals, but the feline face also alludes to the goddesses who manifested themselves as lionesses. The leopard head is often seen decorating both male and female clothing and was often used to indicate its wearer's royal identity as the king was assimilated to the leopard in Egyptian art and literature. The leopard skin also symbolized the night sky and was moreover a typical item of the funerary priests' costume. Gold represented the sun's brilliance, its life-promoting properties, its connotations of daily renewal, and was considered as the "flesh of the gods". The leopard heads are connected by chains of beads made of amethyst, following the Middle Kingdom fashion. The materials chosen for jewellery depended on taste but also on availability. The amethyst of this belt is a violet form of quartz named *hsmn* in the Egyptian language. Some evidence indicates that it was sourced from Crete from at least the Middle Kingdom onwards.





Necklace with pectoral in the name of Amenemhat III

Gold, lapis-lazuli, cornelian, turquoise, height 7.9 cm, Dahshur, 12th Dynasty, reign of Amenemhat III. 1842 - 1797 BC., Upper floor, room 4.

Pectorals are known in hieroglyphs as *wdja*, they are shown most of the time in a key-hole design as a trapezoidal pendant attached to a chain. The earliest known pectorals go back to 12th Dynasty.

This pectoral was found in the cachette of princess Meret in Dahshur, and dates from the reign of her son Amenemhat III who may have offered it to her, which would go to prove that she had survived her husband. Alternatively it may have been given to the princess by her father and brother both together. During his 45-year reign, Amenemhat III sent expeditions to Sinai to mine the turquoise quarries.

The pectoral more than other pieces of jewellery was linked to concepts about religion, kingship and the netherworld as they provided sufficient space to express the intended idea.

This pectoral has a kiosk frame or chapel shape and is decorated by small pieces of semi-precious stones such as red cornelian, lapis-lazuli, turquoise, gold, and amethyst, a variety of transparent purple quartzite with a violet colour called *hsmn* in ancient Egyptian that was mined from the Eastern Desert or Wady el-Howdi.

Inside the chapel frame, we see the goddess Nekhbet as a vulture. Her wings stretch out to the walls of the shrine and are surmounted by her title carved on each side as *nbt pt* meaning “the mistress of the sky”. The goddess is holding in each claw the *ankh* and *djed* signs of life and stability which reach to the king as if she gives him life and stability. Nekhbet was a very ancient goddess whose name means the “the white one” and who was originally from Upper Egypt, but was later connected to the queens and princesses as a protective female goddess. Below Nekhbet the symmetry of the pectoral is very clear as dualism is one pillar of Egyptian art, the king being a sovereign for both Upper and Lower Egypt.

There is a double cartouche for Amenemhat III bearing his throne name *ny-maat-ra*, “he who belongs to the justice of Ra” and between the cartouches one of the king’s titles, *ntr nfr nb tawy, nb khaswt* “the good god, lord of the Two Lands and of the foreign lands”. The king is represented smiting enemies. He is holding a mace in one hand while in the other, he is catching the enemy by the hair to display his humiliation and total surrender.

The king wears a *khat* headdress with a cobra *uraeus* on the front and a *wskh* necklace. He is dressed in a short tunic attached by a strap across the breast. Hieroglyphs fill the space behind and between the king’s legs. It states: “the king is smiting the Bedouin of Asia”. The enemy, who holds his weapon as a sign of surrender, kneels in front of the king. Two hands rise from an *ankh* sign placed behind the king. They hold an ostrich-feather fan which supports the king.



Bracelet of Queen Ahhotep

Gold, lapis-lazuli, diameter 5.5 cm, height 3.4 cm; Thebes, 18th Dynasty, reign of Ahmose 1570 - 1546 BC., Upper floor, room 4.

This bracelet is made of gold and lapis-lazuli, it is formed by two semi-circles. Queen Ahhotep is the mother of Ahmose I. Many objects of war were found in her tomb.

Both sides are decorated with symbolic representations. The first side shows four kneeling figures, the two at the right side have a head of a jackal, and the other two at the left side have a head of a falcon. Those figures represent the legendary souls of the cities of Buto in Lower Egypt and Nekhen in Upper Egypt, thus symbolising the Lower Egyptian and the Upper Egyptian kings before the unification. They raise their arms in expression of jubilation and the hieroglyphs beside them mention the word *rshwt* which means joy. This meant that the ancestors of the Egyptian kings were rejoicing at the presence of King Ahmose.

The other side of the bracelet shows a fan in the middle of a mirror image scene representing Geb and Nut, god of the earth and goddess of the sky. Geb is enthroned and dressed in a large short garment wearing the Double Crown on the right side and the Red Crown of Lower Egypt at the left side. He is holding the arm of a kneeling figure and pats his shoulder with his other hand. The kneeling man is King Ahmose whose name is represented in his cartouches at the right and left extremities of the picture. The king is represented with a royal cobra, curly wig a *usekh* collar and a short *shendyt* kilt.

The reason for the presence of military objects in Ahhotep's tomb is that she was the mother of King Ahmose I, liberator of Egypt. The Hyksus had ruled Egypt for about 150 years until Kamose, the son and successor of the unfortunate Sekenenre continued the fight for freedom against the foreigners. While the Hyksus had occupied Lower Egypt, the Upper Egyptian nomes reunited to force out the enemy. Kamose succeeded in pushing the Hyksus to withdraw to the Eastern Delta, in their fortified city Avaris. Then Kamose died, and he was succeeded by his nephew Ahmose I, who was about 16 years old. Also about the time of his accession he married his elder sister, who like him, was called Ahmose, to which now she added the name Nofertari meaning 'Beautiful companion'.

Ahmose had a decisive victory over the Hyksus, expelled them from Egypt and continued the campaign into Syria and after three years returned victoriously to Thebes. His next mission was to reconquer Nubia, and to crush the revolt of the desert tribes. Back in Thebes peace was not yet fully established, because local princes became too strong and independent. Now his aim was to consolidate the rule of the central government. The feudal state had to be crushed and the pharaohs rule had to be imposed all over the country.

Prior to the 15th Dynasty, Egypt was a peaceful nation, and was confined within its borders. Natural barriers, sea, mountains and arid desert separated the Nile Valley from the rest of the world. The Egyptians carried out a sort of isolation policy.

They never cared to what was happening in neighbouring countries. Egypt was their whole world. Then the Hyksus invaded Egypt, occupied the country, humiliated the Egyptians, ruined the temples and the gods and devastate the economy. The liberation war had started by Sekenenre and Kamose then carried on by his successor Ahmose I. In response to the humility Egypt suffered under the Hyksus, she became a militantly aggressive nation with imperial ambitions. This urge to march the army eastwards was partly in revenge for the devastation of their own country by the easterners. Hence the pharaohs went out of their isolation and participated in the affairs of the outside world. Egypt became an imperial power, first magnificently victorious, but finally occupied and devastated. With the 18th Dynasty Egypt reached the summit of her imperial age.



Pectoral of Queen Ahhotep

Gold, lapis-lazuli, height 7.2 cm; Thebes, 18th Dynasty, reign of Ahmose 1570 - 1546 BC., Upper floor, room 4.

This pectoral has a typical shape of the kiosk or the chapel which ended by the cornice or the Egyptian fries. The bottom side was formed with zigzag lines to represent water or the river Nile where the divine bark *wja* was navigating. Ahmose I the victorious king who defeated the Hyksos stands gloriously between Amun-Ra at the right and Ra-Herakhte at the left. The king is being purified by the two state gods. The rite of purification was normally done by two other gods Thot and Horus. But this time we see Amun-Ra representing Upper Egypt and Ra-Herakhte representing Lower Egypt. The water is seen pouring from the *hst* jars that contained the revival water of the river Nile. The purification aimed to revive the dead king by the water of the Nile which was thought to be the transpiration of Osiris. The purification rite explains the solar cult as the king had to be identified with the sun that was purified at the moment of its rise in the celestial river.

The pectoral is committed to the canon of the Egyptian art with a symmetry in representing goddess Nekhbet at left and right. Behind Amun-Re the hieroglyphic text reads : “*the son of Ra, Ahmose, may he be given life*” and in the opposite side behind Ra-Herakhte the text reads : “*Nb Behet Re*” the perfect god, the lord of the two lands”. This pectoral belonged to Queen Ahhotep, mother of Ahmose who had contributed much in the liberation of Egypt from the invasion of the Hyksos. She had a title of “the mistress of the *hawnibw* or the mistress of the Mediterranean islands”. It was she who started rising the position of royal women. Therefore, we see that King Ahmose I dedicated to her memory a lot of respect and honour.





Model boats of Ahmose I

Gold, silver, wood, *above* length 48 cm, *right* length 43 cm; Thebes, 18th Dynasty, reign of Ahmose 1570 - 1546 BC., Upper floor, room 4.

Both these boats made of wood covered with silver, gold and bronze were part of the treasury of Queen Ahhotep, the mother of Kings Kamose and Ahmose. After Kamose's death, she took on an effective role in the liberation wars against the Hyksus as she assumed the regency during Ahmose's childhood and saw to it that he received a military education.

Placing boats in a grave was a very ancient custom practised since the Archaic Period. Model boats made of clay were found in the royal mastabas in Sakkara and Abydos. The presence of boats is hardly surprising given the central role of the River Nile in Egypt. Many varieties of boats were known in Egypt, for the army, for trade and for travelling. Some of them were funerary such as Kheops's solar boat. Others were dedicated for the pilgrimages to Abydos and Buto.

The innovation introduced with the first of these two boats is the wheeled vehicle which did not exist before the invasion of the Hyksus in the Second Intermediate Period and was therefore likely introduced by them to Egypt. The Egyptians had been overwhelmed by the Hyksus whose chariots gave them great mobility. But it is these same chariots, named *wrryt* or *mrkbt* in Egyptian, which probably in turn helped the Egyptians establish their empire in Asia.

In the boat with the wheels, the bow and the stern are ended by papyrus umbel ornaments. The crew in the boat is composed of silver oarsmen except for one more important member shaped in gold like the helmsman and the captain who has his finger in his mouth as if he was speaking or giving orders to the crew. The seat at the stern is inscribed with the cartouche of Kamose. The second boat, made of silver, is much simpler and is manned only by a helmsman and oarsmen.



Necklace with pectoral in the form of a solar boat

Gold, silver, semi-precious stone and glass paste, overall length 44 cm, width of pectoral 11.5 cm, height of pectoral 6.3 cm, Valley of the Kings, 18th Dynasty, Tutankhamun's reign, 1334 - 1325 BC, Upper floor, room 3.

This necklace was part of Tutankhamun's jewellery found stacked inside a box inlaid with ebony and ivory discovered in the Treasury. The main theme of the necklace is a lapis-lazuli scarab surmounted by a gold-rimmed sun disk. The scarab represents *khepri*, the sun god. Scarab beetles naturally emerge from balls of dung, therefore the ancient Egyptians associated the scarab with creation. In the Pyramid Texts of the 5th Dynasty the sun appears every day with the name of *khepri*. The sun as it moved from east to west was believed to be physically pushed like a dung ball by *khepri*. Hence the representation in this necklace. As a deity associated with resurrection *khepri* was believed to be swallowed each evening by the sky goddess Nut and to be reborn again each morning; the solar boat was used for the night journey. Two baboons, their heads surmounted by a crescent and a lunar disk, sit on the solar boat. The ancient Egyptians believed that at dawn the two baboons helped the rising sun come out of the netherworld. With the rising sun, the dead in the netherworld came back to life in a sort of resurrection. The water on which the solar boat sails is represented as a thin rectangular blue-coloured glass plate with inlaid gold in a zigzag motif to imitate water. On the upper side of the scene the night sky is represented with a narrow blue-coloured glass plate with inlaid gold stars.



Pectoral of the sky goddess Nut

Gold, semi-precious stone and glass paste, height 12.6 cm, width 14.3 cm, Valley of the Kings, 18th Dynasty, Tutankhamun's reign, 1334 - 1325 BC, Upper floor, room 3.

The remarkable feature in this shrine-shaped pectoral is that its fittings are made to hang from the side on a belt or a waistband. A coloured border runs along its circumference and the top row has a palm-frond cornice. Unlike other similar pieces with openwork, the inner section is a solid gold plaque and the area thus gained is used to write hieroglyphic text.

The upper part is surmounted with a cavetto cornice. The cartouches give the names of King Tutankhamun, but show some alteration and modification, having probably belonged to another king and reused for King Tutankhamun. On the other hand, the alteration may be the correction of a mistake.

Every evening, Nut was believed to swallow the setting sun and then give birth to it every morning. These acts are depicted on the ceilings of several tombs in the Kings Valley and in many temples. In the New Kingdom Period, representations of the deceased were shown under Nut's protection, assuring his rebirth, just as the sun was newly born each day. Nut afforded protection among the imperishable stars in her body, and as such, was depicted on the underside of many coffin lids to give such assistance to the deceased.

A member of the Heliopolitan Ennead, Nut is mentioned in Spell 548 of the Pyramid Texts as the celestial cow who suckles the king and takes him to herself in the sky. The goddess is, in fact, often represented as a woman, whose naked body is arched over the earth. In addition, in Spell 306 of the Coffin Texts, she performs the swallowing of the deceased, who is identified with Re.

The deceased sought magical protection for his soul by the use of amulets and jewellery, just as he sought physical protection through mummification. The most typical funerary jewellery was an attempt to gain help and influence by magical means.



Pectoral of the sky goddess Nut as a vulture

Gold, semi-precious stone and glass paste, height 12 cm, width 17 cm, Valley of the Kings, 18th Dynasty, Tutankhamun's reign, 1334 - 1325 BC, Upper floor, room 3.

Some 143 pieces of jewellery were found in Tutankhamun's treasures, and the whole collection amounts to 3,500 pieces. Some of the jewellery was found on the mummy, and other pieces were found inside the various chests and boxes placed inside the tomb. This pectoral was found in a chest, surmounted by the god Anubis in the tomb treasury, adjacent to the burial chamber.

The hieroglyphic signs on the rear side of this pectoral associate the vulture here with the sky goddess Nut, who is in turn associated with 'Isis that protects Osiris and Horus and accordingly will protect the mummy', as indicated in Chapter 157 of the 'Book of the Dead'.

Another vulture goddess called Nekhbet, is often related to kings and kingship. One of her earliest appearances holding the *shen* sign was on the Second Dynasty stone vase of Khasekhemwy from Hierakonpolis, which was the cult centre of that goddess. Other goddesses are also represented as vultures like the goddess Mut, wife of the god Amen and a member of the divine Theban triad.





Pectoral of Osiris, Isis and Nephtys

Gold, semi-precious stone and glass paste, height 15.5 cm, width 20 cm, Valley of the Kings, 18th Dynasty, Tutankhamun's reign, 1334 - 1325 BC, Upper floor, room 3.

Tutankhamun's treasures include 26 pectorals and those worn during his life show signs of wear. This pectoral, which appears to have been worn was also found in the Anubis chest in the tomb treasury. It is shaped like a shrine, featuring a cavetto cornice at the top and surmounted by two cobras with vultures' wings. Under the cornice, is a frieze of lotus flowers with a cobra wearing the solar disc at both sides.

At the right side of the pectoral is a cobra wearing the Red Crown of Lower Egypt, and two wings framing a *shen* sign. It lies on a basket with a checker design. Although this cobra represents the goddess Wadjet, the protective deity of Lower Egypt; the text beside it gives the name of the goddess Nephtys. The left side of the pectoral features a vulture wearing White Crown, which is flanked by two feathers, recalling the *atef* Crown. It stretches its wings to protect the *shen* sign, and is resting on a basket similar to the one on the right side. Here too is the vulture goddess Nekhbet, the deity of Upper Egypt, and an accompanying text mentions the name of Isis.

In the centre, Osiris is shown in mummy form, wearing the *atef* Crown and a large pectoral; holding the *heka* and *nekhekh* scepters. Osiris here represents the king himself, who would be associated with Osiris after death and resurrected in his realm in the hereafter. The text beside runs: *nb neheh, heka djet, neter nefer, nb ta djoser*, 'The lord of eternity, ruler of everlasting, the good god, lord of the holy land'.





Necklace of the Sun Rising on the Horizon

Gold, semi-precious stone and glass paste, width of pectoral 11.8 cm, length of strap 50 cm, Valley of the Kings, 18th Dynasty, Tutankhamun's reign, 1334 - 1325 BC, Upper floor, room 3.

The sun disk made of cornelian is placed in the centre of the pectoral. It is being by the scarab *khepri*. It is the divine comparison to the ball of dung pushed by the beetle in the early morning. The sun is placed between two hills in the form of *akhet* sign of horizon. *Khepri* is in the middle of a bark surrounded by a pair of *uraei* and three pairs of amulets, namely the *djed*, *ankh* and *nefer*.

The same scene is repeated in the straps, *khepri* pushing the sun disc in gold flanked by two *uraei*, followed by the three amulets flanked by a pair of *uraei* topped with a cornelian sun disk. The straps end in a pair of vultures representing the protective goddess Nekhbet of Upper Egypt. The counterpoise is a pair of *uraei*.



Necklace with vulture Nekhbet pectoral

Gold, lapis-lazuli, cornelian, width 11 cm, Valley of the Kings, 18th Dynasty, Tutankhamun's reign, 1334 - 1325 BC, Upper floor, room 3.

This necklace is in the form of the vulture Nekhbet, Pre Dynastic goddess of Upper Egypt. The head of the vulture is turned forward, wings are spread in a protective manner, the claws hold the *shen* sign symbol of eternity. Body and wings are inlaid with lapis-lazuli. The *shen* sign is made of cornelian. The vulture has no crown on her head.

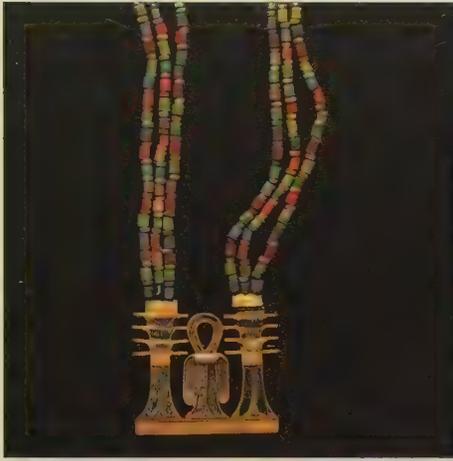
Nekhbet, the local goddess of the ancient city of Nekheh, was worshipped as vulture. The city Nekheh lies on the east bank of the Nile 80 km south of Luxor, was one of the oldest settlements of Upper Egypt, dating back to 5000 BC. Because of the city's geographical position, it had great strategic importance in that it controlled the routes to the gold mines of Wady Abad and Wady Mia.

On the west bank of the Nile opposite Nekheh lay the earliest capital city of Upper Egypt, Nekhen (Hierakonpolis in Greek, and today Kom el-Ahmar). Because of the proximity of Nekheh to Nekhen, and because of the importance of Nekheh itself, the goddess Nekhbet became the principal goddess of Upper Egypt during the predynastic period. In dynastic times, Nekhbet was elevated to the role of protectress of the king of Upper Egypt. Her northern counterpart was the goddess Wadjet. When Narmer united Upper and Lower Egypt, he symbolized the event by adopting a title which identified him with two deities : the *nbty* name, which in hieroglyphic script is written showing a vulture and a cobra, the Two Ladies Nekhbet and Wadjet. From that time, the *nbty* name formed part of the title of every king.

Nekhbet's role of protectress is reflected in the design of royal jewellery such as the broad collars and pectorals which the kings wore during their life. Whenever Nekhbet was used as a motif in jewellery, she held in her claws the hieroglyphic *shen* sign. Here the *shen* sign denotes that Nekhbet offers the king sovereignty over all that the sun encircles. Even the cobra Wadjet could sometimes be equipped with claws in which to hold a *shen* sign so that she too, might offer the king mastery over the world.

On monuments, Nekhbet is usually shown with wings outstretched, hovering protectively over the figure of a king. During the New Kingdom, Nekheh was the capital of the third nome of Upper Egypt. From predynastic times till the Roman era, kings built or renewed shrines and temples there and dedicated them to Nekhbet.





Necklace with an inlaid Wadjet

Gold, glass, lapis-lazuli, turquoise, cornelian, height 5.7 cm, width 9.5 cm, Valley of the Kings, 18th Dynasty, Tutankhamun's reign, 1334 - 1325 BC, Upper floor, room 3.

Howard Carter believed that this necklace was possibly worn by the king during his lifetime. The eye is inlaid with crystalline limestone and lapis-lazuli. On the left side we see Nekhbet the protective goddess of Upper Egypt wearing the White Crown with side feathers and with claws holding the *shen* sign. On the right side we see the protective *uraei* goddess of Lower Egypt wearing the Red Crown. From the earliest times, the Egyptians considered the cobra to be a sign of royalty, presumably because the cobra goddess of Lower Egypt was closely connected to the kings. Myth says that Wadjet guarded the infant Horus, son of Isis and Osiris after his birth in the marshes of Lower Egypt. Later it was her task to guard every king of Egypt, who was regarded as the living Horus on the throne of Egypt. This pectoral gave the king symbolically dominion over the whole land of Egypt with Wadjet symbolising sovereignty over Lower Egypt and Nekhbet over Upper Egypt.

The *Wadjet* has been known since the Old Kingdom and takes the shape of the eye of the falcon god Horus. The eye of Horus was regarded as one of the strongest protective amulets. It is depicted as a human eye with an eyebrow, and below the eye there is a drop and a curled feather of a falcon. It was usually regarded as the left (lunar) eye plucked out by Seth and restored to Horus by Thoth. To the Egyptians, as to many other people of the world, the eye was a very important symbol. It can be truly claimed that the 'eye is the mirror of the soul'; and many people today in Egypt and in other parts of the world, fear the Evil Eye. Therefore, the Divine Eye was, to the Egyptians a symbol of great significance.

The Divine Eye could take many forms. It could be a goddess such as Tefnut and Hathor, where they were known as the Eye of Re; or it could be the Wadjet eye of Horus with its religious and protective notions. The Wadjet symbol became one of the most important and popular signs of Egypt, used as an emblem, or as an amulet, worn as a protective piece of jewellery, or in the wrappings of mummies. Painted on the prow of a boat, the 'Eye of Horus' was meant to be able to see the way ahead; and to protect the boat and its crew from the evil eye. Even today, boats in the Mediterranean can be seen with eyes painted on their prows. The origin of this lies in the mythology of ancient Egypt.





Collar of the Two Ladies

Gold, semi-precious stone, glass, width 35 cm, Valley of the Kings, 18th Dynasty, Tutankhamun's reign, 1334 - 1325 BC, Upper floor, room 3.

Discovered between the bandages on the chest of Tutankhamun's mummy, this piece is called the *nbty* collar or the Collar of Two Ladies.

It shows a cobra Wadjet flanking the vulture Nekhbet with outstretched wings. The piece and its counterpoise were made using the cloisonné technique, inlaid with hundreds of pieces of semi-precious stones and coloured-glass. Glass and faience possessed magical properties for the ancient Egyptians as they could be transformed from a dull white substance or silica, lime, alkali into a glimmering material. The Wadjet cobra was described as the *wrt hekaw* 'the great of magic'. She was also associated with the eye of Ra, protecting the sun god. In addition, she was represented guarding the gates that divided the hours of the underworld. The vulture Nekhbet, is the goddess of Upper Egypt. With her claws she holds the *shen* sign of eternity. *Shen* means, to last forever; and the cartouche is a modification of this sign.



Pectoral with a winged scarab

Gold, silver, silica glass; height 15 cm, width 15 cm; Valley of the Kings, 18th Dynasty, Tutankhamun's reign, 1334 - 1325 BC, Upper floor, room 3.

Comprised of composite motifs, the upper part of this pectoral shows the figure of the king, accompanied by the falcon-god Ra Herakhty, whose head is surmounted by a solar disc. In addition, there is the ibis-headed god Thot, whose head is surmounted by both the crescent moon and the full moon.

Inside a solar barque is the left *Wadjet* eye of Horus, flanked by two cobras, each wearing a solar disc on its head. The *Wadjet* is the eye of the falcon god Horus with its characteristic marking beneath. The word *Wadjet* means 'the perfect' it belongs to Herwer, who was worshipped at Kom Ombo. An early creator god, 'his right eye was the sun and his left eye was the moon'. During the mythical struggle between the god Horus and his enemy Seth, the left eye of Horus was plucked out, but later restored by the god of wisdom Thot. Horus, the son of Osiris, later brought his father back to life by giving him this eye. This offering of the eye was an alternative to food offerings, and the lunar and solar *Wadjet* are mentioned in Chapters 140 and 167 of the 'Book of the Dead.' The *Wadjet* eye pendant contained great protective power, imbuing the bearer with particular protective qualities.

The barque represented the nocturnal journey of the sun. It is shown here carried by a winged scarab, which holds the *shen* sign of eternity. Scarab beetle is the *scarabaeus sacer*. It became a symbol of new life and rebirth because the beetle lays eggs in a ball of dung. The ancient Egyptians equated the hatching of the eggs with the rise of the 'newly born' sun. The scarab god Kheperi was a creator god, sometimes represented as a man with a scarab head or as a scarab in a boat held by Nun, god of the primeval ocean. The scarab, which emerged from balls of dung, was associated with creation. In the Pyramid Texts, Kheperi was referred to as a sun god, 'he who is coming into being'.

Cosmetic box (*overleaf*)

Gold, silver, semi-precious stones; height 16 cm, width 8.8 cm, Valley of the Kings, 18th Dynasty, Tutankhamun's reign, 1334 - 1325 BC, Upper floor, room 3.

This double cartouche-shaped box was used as a container for cosmetics or ointments. The face on the box shows Tutankhamun as a child, indicated by the lock of hair at the side of his head. The cobra over the forehead, signifies royalty. The hands are placed over the chest, and the king is holding the royal insignia the *heka* crook and *nekhekh* flail.

On his head is the solar disc representing god Ra, flanked by two cobras, with *ankh* signs hanging from each; the king is squatting over a sign symbolising the *heb* feast. Another solar disc, on top of the lid, is flanked by two feathers.

The other sides of the box show the king variously wearing the Blue Crown; again squatting over the *heb* sign, holding the *heka* and *nekhekh* scepters in one hand, and resting the other hand on his knee. Similar solar discs having the above-described decoration as its counter part on the other side exist over his head.

One of the king's faces is black, symbolising the underworld as well as the resurrection and continuity of life, black being the colour of the Nile mud that flooded the land and gave it fertility every year. Moreover, black is one of the colours associated with Osiris, who is sometimes seen with black skin, therefore, emphasising the belief that the king, after his death would personify Osiris, the god of the hereafter.

A representation of Heh, the god of eternity, is seen on the third side of the box. Like the king, he is squatting over the *heb* feast sign and holding two palm fronds, which represent the promise for a million years of life for the king, whose cartouches are represented beside him. Over his head, we see the name *neb kheperw re* enclosed by palm fronds.

The box's base is made of silver, and decorated with the *ankh* and *was* symbols of life and prosperity. Indeed, the box shows great elegance, refinement and a fine artistic sense, as well as a high standard of skills that involved casting and hammering techniques.







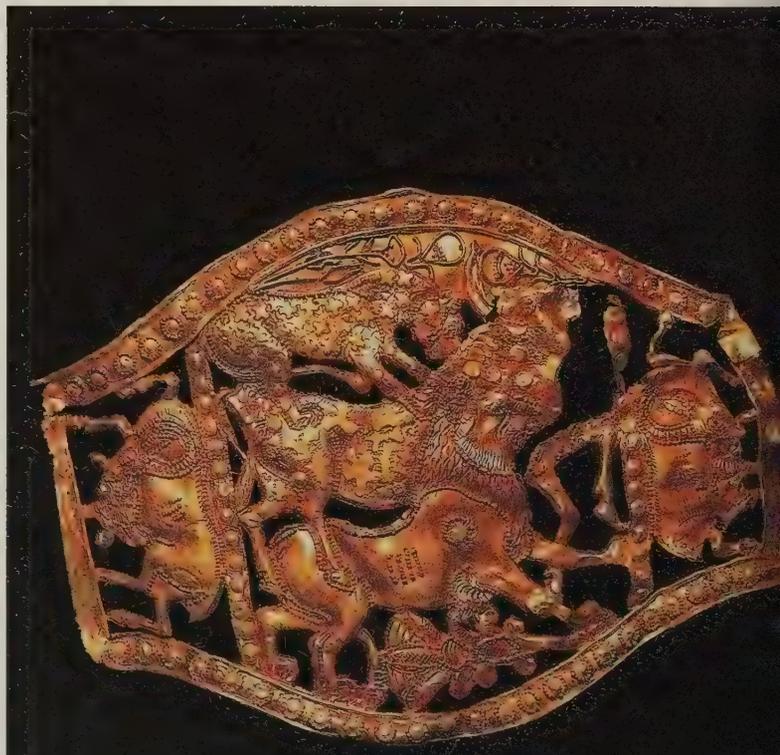


Gold Buckles of Tutankhamun

Tutankhamun had four gold buckles found in a box in the antechamber. Picture *above* shows him on his throne protected by Maat and being offered a sphinx by Atum. Picture *above right* shows him and his queen having a nice time in a garden. The picture *right* has a scene of wild bulls attacked by a lioness and in picture in *facing page* depicts the king as warrior in his chariot.

Top right : the main theme of this buckle is the king seated on his throne and being approached by his queen Ankhesenamun presenting him a banquet of lotus flowers. The king has his feet resting on a stool. The whole scene takes place inside a kiosk topped by a frieze of cobra and a winged sun-disc. Two captives are shown under the feet of the king one is Asiatic and the other Nubian. Complex floral arrangements are placed behind the king and the queen. Two exactly similar representations are represented vertically on the left and right side of the buckle. The king is depicted as a sphinx with human arms holding the *ankh* sign of life and Maat goddess of justice.

Facing page : the main theme of this buckle is showing the king riding his chariot and returning from war. Two enemy captives, an Asiatic and a Nubian run in front of the chariot. The king is being protected by the winged *uraeus* behind him and by the vulture Nekhbet in front of him. The text on the slab in front of the *uraeus* reads "all life and protection like Ra for ever". A dog is shown running next to the horse. Below the feet of the horse an Asiatic and a Nubian captive are tied up in the symbolic representations of the "Union of the Two Lands". The Asiatic enemy is shown on the left side "Lower Egypt" and the Nubian captive on the right side "Upper Egypt".





Bracelet with scarab clasp

Gold, lapis-lazuli, glass; length 15.8 cm, height of scarab 6.6 cm, Valley of the Kings, 18th Dynasty, Tutankhamun's reign, 1334 - 1325 BC, Upper floor, room 3.

The main theme of this bracelet is the scarab made of lapis-lazuli. It is not carved from a single piece of stone but assembled from various stones and fitted into a gold rim. The legs are also of lapis-lazuli with a gold rim. A gold cartouche is placed between the front legs of the scarab. The king's name *Neb-kheperu-re* is inscribed in the cartouche. The wrist consists of ten rows of beads, the first and last rows are of gold. The middle rows are of blue glass and lapis-lazuli. Eight perpendicular spacers made of a gold plate give the bracelet strength. The fastener of gold fits into a corresponding fitting on the side of the scarab.





Earrings belonging to Tutankhamun

Gold, glass, semi-precious stones; Valley of the Kings, 18th Dynasty, Tutankhamun's reign, 1334 - 1325 BC, Upper floor, room 3.

Earrings were unknown in the Old Kingdom. They came to Egypt from Asia, possibly with the Hyksus invasion. However, it is difficult to accept the fact that the Egyptians adopted anything from their hateful invaders. Earrings were known in Mesopotamia at least a thousand years before they were introduced in Egypt. The earliest earrings came from a tomb of a woman dating the late 17th Dynasty. It is a spiral type earring to be worn on a pierced ear.

Initially women only started wearing them, then men followed. King Tuthmosis IV had his ears pierced. Kings had never been portrayed with earrings, but queens were always depicted wearing them.

Right : Duckhead earrings of Tutankhamun

This earring is to be worn on a pierced ear through a spiral tube that is to be screwed into another tube. Each of the tubes is fastened in a cap. Two *uraei* are placed at one end of the cap. The earrings are of gold inlaid with coloured glass taking the form of a falcon wing. At the centre a duck head made of dark blue glass is placed on the vulture's wings. Out of the tail dangles five flexible extensions made of little gold discs alternating with dark blue glass. Each extension terminates into a pendant *uraeus*.



Pectoral with a scarab flanked by Isis and Nephtys

Gold, turquoise, cornelian, glass, width 16 cm, Valley of the Kings, 18th Dynasty, Tutankhamun's reign, 1334 - 1325 BC, Upper floor, room 3.

The pectoral takes the form of a shrine surmounted by the freeze of *kheker*, a botanic motif, followed by another freeze of the *sa*, symbol of protection. It is made of gold and faience, turquoise, lapis-lazuli and cornelian. The scarab Khepri, the main theme of the amulet is shown pushing the sun disk in simulation of the myth. Two *uraei* flank the sun disk. Isis and Nephtys, as protective goddesses are supporting Khepri. Isis is shown seated on the right side and in front of her one of Tutankhamun's titles is written: "*Nb-Khepru-Ra*, meaning the Lord of Manifestation of Ra". Nephtys is shown seated on the left and in front of her is written the name: "Tutankhamun" meaning 'the living image of Amun'. The faces of both goddesses are made of Sinai turquoise, which was a symbol of heaven. The pectoral was placed on the chest of the mummy as an amulet to protect the deceased king.





Bracelet of Ramses II

Gold, lapis-lazuli; diameter 7.2 cm, Bubastis, 19th Dynasty, reign of Ramses II, 1279 - 1212 BC, Upper floor, room 4.

This bracelet is made by the technique of granulation, in which hundreds of tiny gold granules were attached to the surface of precious metal work to form patterns. This technique was applied in Mesopotamia a millennium earlier. The end results were generally of extreme fine work, having a density of two granules a mm.

The main theme of this bracelet is two duck heads with necks bent 180 degrees. Both heads emerge from one body represented by a piece of lapis-lazuli, and the tail is in gold. The head turned back to show the duck in a sleeping position, awaiting awakening, which symbolized resurrection.

This bracelet along with other similar items were discovered accidentally while constructing a rail-way at Tell Basta in 1906.

Diadem with the figure of Serapis (*overleaf*)

Gold, diameter 22 cm, Dush, Kharga Oasis, Roman Period, reign of Hadrian 117 - 138 AD, Upper floor, room 4.

This treasure was discovered in 1989 by the French expedition. Their age is from the second century AD. The treasure consists of a diadem, two bracelets and pectoral with pendants was found inside a Terracota vase hidden in the temple of Dush, Kharga oasis. The temple was dedicated to Isis and Serapis. The diadem was worn by priests during ceremonies.

The diadem consists of a gold ring adorned by gold leaves. On the front side we see the figure of Serapis seated on a throne. Serapis has a curled hair and a long beared. His right hand is placed on a bust of another deity. With his left hand he holds a mace.

Serapis represents the world creation myth in the Ptolemaic era developed from the myth of Osiris. The Egyptians identified Serapis as Ra, Osiris and Apis, and the Greeks identified Serapis as Zeus, Asklepios and Dionysos. His shrines were in Sakkara and Alexandria. Serapis was also worshipped in Greece and Rome in the early Christian era. He is represented as the bust of Zeus.

Bracelet of Dush (*overleaf, inset*)

Gold, agate, diameter 9 cm, Dush, Kharga Oasis, Roman Period, reign of Hadrian 117 - 138 AD, Upper floor, room 4.

The bracelet consists of a gold ring adorned with sheets of gold in the form of vine leaves with an agate stone in the centre. The bracelet is 9 cm in diameter.







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