Case 2-AFR-Egy-Bes-Amulet-Faience-950-700 BCE



**Case No.: 2**

**Accession Number:**

**Formal Label:**

Display Description:

A [faience](https://www.ancient.eu/Faience/) amulet of the [Egyptian](https://www.ancient.eu/Egyptian/) protective deity [Bes](https://www.ancient.eu/Bes/). [Egypt](https://www.ancient.eu/egypt/), 950-700 BCE. In ancient [Egypt](https://www.ancient.eu/egypt/), if a woman were having difficulty conceiving a child, she might spend an evening in a [Bes](https://www.ancient.eu/Bes/) Chamber (also known as an incubation chamber) located within a [temple](https://www.ancient.eu/temple/). Bes was the god of childbirth, sexuality, fertility, among other his other responsibilities, and it was thought an evening in the god's presence would encourage conception. [Women](https://www.ancient.eu/women/) would carry Bes amulets, wear Bes tattoos, in an effort to encourage fertility.

Once a child was born, Bes images and amulets were used in protection as he or she grew and, later, the child would become an adult who adopted these same rituals and beliefs in daily life. At [death](https://www.ancient.eu/Death/), the person was thought to move on to another plane of existence, the land of the gods, and the rituals surrounding [burial](https://www.ancient.eu/burial/) were based on the same understanding one had known all of one's life: that supernatural powers were as real as any other aspect of existence and the universe was infused by magic.

****LC Classification:****

****Date or Time Horizon:****

****Geographical Area:****

****Map:****

****GPS Coordinates:****

****Cultural Affiliation:****

****Medium:****

Dimensions:   
Weight:

Provenance****:****

Condition:

Discussion:

Magic in ancient Egypt was not a parlor trick or illusion; it was the harnessing of the powers of natural laws, conceived of as supernatural entities, in order to achieve a certain goal. To the Egyptians, a world without magic was inconceivable. It was through magic that the world had been created, magic sustained the world daily, magic healed when one was sick, gave when one had nothing, and assured one of eternal life after death. The Egyptologist James Henry Breasted has famously remarked how magic infused every aspect of ancient [Egyptian](https://www.ancient.eu/Egyptian/) life and was "as much a matter of course as sleep or the preparation of food" (200). Magic was present in one's conception, birth, life, death, and afterlife and was represented by a god who was older than creation

References:

Appendix:

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