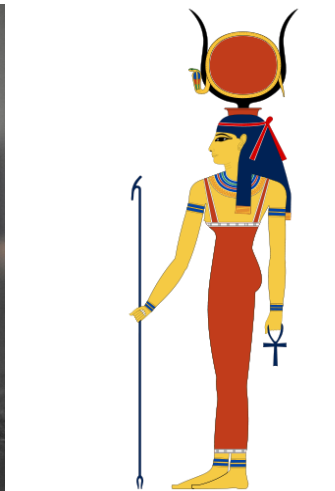


To begin, the most important things to note about the amulet mould are the purpose and the powers it supposedly withheld. On the front, it's easy to see that it's Hathor on the front which is the Goddess of love, music, dance, maternal care. Could that possibly mean the deceased person buried with this amulet was a woman? It would make more sense considering Hathor's powers favoured women more than men.



The Goddess Hathor.

The Amulet Mould.

While not exactly the same position or pose, the horns that are commonly on top of her head can be seen in the amulet's impression, therefore I can safely and confidently conclude that the figure on the amulet is Hathor.

As for amulets themselves, they were believed to have powerful magic to ward off illnesses, bad omens and even evil deities that would harm or affect a person's every day life, it's definitely the same for amulets that are used for funerals since there's the big belief in ancient Egypt that any object buried with you in your coffin would be taken to the afterlife once you head there, there's also the fact that the most popular material to use to create amulets was Faience, a green-blue material which was the colour favourable with life and regeneration.



This is a Faience amulet of Nefertem who was commonly used as a symbol of good luck.

Amulets worked by transferring the power/magic of the amulet to the owner the moment they were worn or placed on the corpse of the deceased so that the power/magic would transfer, however... it needed to be a specific shape, colour and material for some magic to work, especially for the afterlife.

Out of all the possibilities on which type of amulet this amulet might've been, I think it's most likely a funeral amulet considering if it was one that was worn by a person while they were alive, they would've had a small hole where the string for the necklace would've been on. Then again, the amulets which have string on them are mostly scarabs due to how small and versatile they are, scarab beetles were also another popular object to use as an amulet due to their representation of the cycle of life and death which was in the Ancient Egyptian's belief to be a form of protection.



Heart Scarab of Hatnefer.

During the olden times of Ancient Egypt, there were many types of amulets used. Most of them represented either Gods, Goddess or objects that had significant meaning in the beliefs of the Ancient Egyptians, two of the most common were the scarab beetle and the eye of Wedjat which are two amulets that represent either protection or the power of regeneration and therefore to heal or keep an Ancient Egyptian healthy during their time alive, it's possibly they also used these protections to protect the dead when they made their journey to the afterlife.



The eye of Wedjat, another common amulet that was used due to its representation of regeneration after the story of Horus who's eye was stolen by the God Seth but it was then restored by the god Thoth.

Magic seems to be a big belief among the Ancient Egyptians as the biggest and most powerful force to protect and attack. They acknowledge magic as the same power as the Gods, therefore, they believe that the God Heka was the first and most important God of the ancient times. However, Heka is overlooked despite being the God of magic and therefore essentially the God of creation, the reason for this is because his presence is pervasive to the point where he became almost invisible to the Egyptologists of the 19th and 20th Century.



The Egyptian God of Magic and medicine, Heka.

Magic was also a big concept for amulets, believing that in order to make the amulets gain the power of keeping away the negative and harmful things of this world to conduct a ritual that will imbue the amulet with magic and therefore the power they seek.

Funnily enough, while the amulet was most likely made in the New Kingdom era, funerary amulets were more popular during the late Period between the years 664 to 332 B.C. They began with the belief of a person's heart being weighed in the after-life, and if the heart was heavier than the feather then the soul would be damned to the Underworld. The funerary amulets were created to counteract the judgement, hoping to use the power and magic of the amulets to ensure a positive outcome. One such funerary amulet was the heart scarab which depicted a large scarab beetle with text engraved on the underside which would relate to the process of the weighing of the heart.



A heart scarab with the inscription on the underside.

An important thing to figure out from artefacts is the date of when it was made, it's probably the hardest to understand without a date being engraved on the artefact. Considering the object I've chosen is an amulet, that also means it'll be even harder to get a precise date considering amulets were created from the Predynastic to the Roman Period. However, we can narrow it down to the New Kingdom era considering that was the era when amulets depicting deities began being created. In other words, this amulet was most likely created between the years of 1550 to 1070 B.C.



One of the many cave paintings during the New Kingdom.

A fact that makes the artefact interesting is that amulets were inexpensive back in Ancient Egypt, that means pretty much anyone could get an amulet, this means that we aren't able to tell if the woman who was buried with the amulet was either rich, of royalty or a normal poor person. This means the only proper way to tell the status of the deceased was by the way they were buried or the coffin used to house the person's body.

Another interesting thing about amulets, they were not always made from clay or metal from sculptors. There were instances where the magic used on amulets would be used on pretty much any object one could find... all the ancient Egyptians needed was the right incantation which would imbue the object with magic that would protect the wearer the same as a manmade amulet would.



A small amulet made from what seems to be a uniquely shaped rock.

The fact that most amulets have more than one purpose gives me the idea that perhaps the amulet I'm currently studying also may have more than one purpose, perhaps while it also has the magical powers of Hathor and therefore works with maternal care. It could also have been an amulet to help get a positive result from the judgement of the heart if the Goddess of Joy were to give her power and approval to help pass good judgement on the deceased during their afterlife too.

Many amulets were said to have more than one meaning, which also means they had more than one function, for example: headrest amulets were depicted as being able to lift the head of the sleeping person while also having protective writing or imagery engraved on it. But also the fact of raising the head of any deceased person was a symbol of resurrection and revival.



A headrest amulet from the Late Period.