



STATUETTE OF OSIRIS

Egypt
Late Dynastic Period, XXVIth Dynasty, 664 to 525 BC
Steatite
Height 14 cm

The standing god is represented momiform, his body tightly wrapped in a garment from which his protruding hands rest one above the other on his chest. Osiris is holding in his right hand the flagellum, Nehaha sceptre and in his left hand the Heka sceptre. He is wearing the Atef crown, formed from the hedjet, the white crown of Upper Egypt, decorated with the uraeus on the forehead and flanked by an ostrich feather on each side. Osiris is adorned with a false beard, slightly curved at the end.

Osiris was a complex deity who possessed an essentially dual role in the religion of ancient Egypt. Originally worshipped as a god of fertility and gradually accrued the trappings of a mummified god-king, Ruler of the Underworld and Lord of Resurrection by assimilation with various local gods. In time the king, who in life was the embodiment of Horus, became Osiris in death - a transformation later extended to all Egyptians, bestowing for the first time the opportunity for an independent existence in the next world. This development ensured Osiris a timeless and unbounded popularity that is reflected in the numerous votive images of the god in a variety of stones and metals.

PROVENANCE

Former private collection France, acquired in early 1980 at Galerie Carrefour, Claude Verité, Paris France

LITERATURE

S. Schoske & D. Wildung: *Gott und Götter im Alten Ägypten*, Philipp von Zabern, Mainz 1992
E. Feucht: *Vom Nil zum Neckar*, Heidelberg, 1986