THE SYMBOLISM OF THE MEMPHITE DJED-PILLAR

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In 1975 the joint Expedition of the Egypt Exploration Society and the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden was fortunate enough to discover the long lost tomb of Horemheb, Commander-in-Chief of Tut'ankhamun. Since then this important monument has yielded an enormous amount of new material for the study of almost all branches of Egyptology. It has provided us with a wealth of information, not only on the history, art and architecture of that shady period between the decline of the Amarna Age and the rise of the 19th Dynasty, but also on its religion as it recovered from Akhenaten's monotheistic heresy. Chief among the religious documents found in the tomb is a previously unknown hymn to the god Osiris, a worthy companion of the famous stela with a hymn to the Sun-god and of the panels inscribed with shorter hymns to Re' and Osiris, all among the treasures of the British Museum. The present writer was given the privilege of preparing a translation and commentary of this newly discovered text which will appear in Vol. I of G.T. Martin's final publication of the tomb under the title An Early Hymn to Osiris as Nocturnal Manifestation of Re'. Naturally, we cannot discuss this text at any length here, but a few remarks must be made on its contents, since I believe they have a bearing on the main subject of this article, the so-called Memphite Djed-pillars.

One of the reasons why Akhenaten's monotheistic revolution did not survive its instigator may have been that it was unable to provide a satisfying alternative for the traditional concepts about death and life after death, a matter which was of utmost importance to the ancient Egyptians and hence one of the major concerns of their religion. If another basic deficiency of the new creed, the lack of a personal relation with the god, was more or less counterbalanced by directing this personal piety to the King himself, no such alternative existed for the absence of a hereafter and its gods. When Aten lights up the world with his rays he gives life to everybody, but when he sets in the western horizon darkness and death cover the earth and its inhabitants, or, as the Great Hymn to the Aten expresses it: "When you have risen they live, when you set they die". In the traditional religion Re' went down into the Underworld and spent the night in the hereafter, and hymns praising the Sun-god "at his rising" (lět wbni.f) are supplemented by those extolling him "when he sets" (lět htpt.f). No hymns to the setting Aten are known, however, and texts from Amarna, otherwise so eloquent, remain silent about what happened with the god once he had disappeared below the horizon. Since Aten was the sole god, this lacuna could not be filled with a god like Osiris, and although a belief in a life after death naturally persisted, this belief does not seem to have been firmly rooted in a mythical concept like the one provided by the traditional religion.

In the period following the Amarna interlude a reaction to the monotheism of Akhenaten becomes apparent in a new solution for the problem of unity and plurality posed by Akhenaten's doctrine. The traditional gods of the Egyptian pantheon are viewed as emanations of a universal god, as a "multiplicity of constitutive powers, roles and forms" of his divine person. This universal god manifests himself in his creation which includes not only this world but also the hereafter. To emphasize this, hymns to Osiris of the post-Amarna era take up a theme already present in the funerary texts of bygone ages, but almost completely absent from the hymnical literature of the period before Amarna. In accordance with the concept of a universal god, Osiris is seen as a form of the Sun-god, and vice versa. When Re' enters the realm of the dead he unites with the seemingly dead body of Osiris resting in the deepest darkness of the Underworld. They embrace each other and become one god, Re'-Osiris or Osiris-Re', who illuminates the Underworld as nocturnal Sun-god. Thus the "dead" Osiris is revivified by Re', and Re' is reborn in the morning as Osiris' posthumously born son and rein-

* The present article is an expanded version of a paper presented at a Colloquium on "Memphis/Saqqāra in the New Kingdom", held at the British Museum, London, 1-2 August 1983. — Abbreviations used here are those of the Lexikon der Ägyptologie, Wiesbaden 1972 ff.
1. See the Preliminary Reports in Martin 1976-1979. Articles for the general reader by the same author have appeared in various periodicals; for these the reader is referred to Janssen 1979-1982. For an account in Dutch see Schneider 1976.
2. BM 551 and 550 + 552; Edwards 1939, Pls. 27-28.
3. Although this too did not fail to incite a reaction, for it is at Amarna that the earliest evidence of a private cult of the god Shed ("the Saviour") is found, see Peet/Woolley 1923, 97-98, Pl. 28.
carnation Horus. Since Rē and Osiris are mutually dependent, the role of Osiris becomes much more prominent in the tombs of private individuals than it had been before the Amarna period.

The hymn to Osiris in the tomb of Horemheb is one of the earliest examples of a hymn of the new type, describing the god as nocturnal form of the Sun-god. Thus Osiris is said to be “ram-headed” (ḏētyt-ip), which means that he embodies Rē, as in the well-known vignette from the Litany of Rē found in the tomb of queen Neferetari and in some other tombs. It shows a ram-headed Osiris with the double legend: “This is Rē who has gone to rest in Osiris”, and: “Osiris who has gone to rest in Rē”[7]. Further, Osiris has a “body of white gold” and a “head of lapis-lazuli”, both frequently associated with the rising Sun-god, and he is “great of appearances in the Chapel of the Phoenix”, the sanctuary of Rē in Heliopolis from which he arises, as the Pyramid Texts (Pyr.1652) already say. The visible signs of the united Rē-Osiris are Orion, the most brilliant constellation in the southern sky, and the moon. Both are mentioned in Horemheb’s hymn. Osiris is addressed as “beautiful Orion who crosses heaven... who is carried in pregnancy in the womb of [Nut] by day and born in profound darkness (m wsḥw) by night”, an exact inversion of the usual description of the birth of the Sun-god. As a Moon-god Rē-Osiris appears in our text as “Pillar of Hēḥ” (ḥwn n ḫḥ). The moon is often called ḫwn or ḫwny “(he of the) pillar”, “pillar-god”; especially when it is associated with ṭwn-Osiris[8]. In a hymn from the 21st Dynasty, to mention only one example here, Rē is called “Sun by day, Pillar by night”[9]. As early as the Pyramid Texts (Pyr.1143b) the ḫwn-pillar is mentioned as support of heaven. A recently discovered inscription on the base of the pyramid in the tomb of Tia at Saqqara describes Rē-Harakhty as he rises in the Underworld with the epithet “Pillar of heaven, who supports the sky” (ḥwn n ḫḥ). Shu, the god who separates heaven and earth, is also called a Pillar-god, as in the magical papyrus Harris[10] or in a late text from the temple of Esna which addresses Shu as “Pillar who proceeds carrying the sky above the earth every day, Creator God who lifts up heaven in his form of Hēḥ”[11]. Just as Shu as a Pillar-god brings light at dawn by separating heaven and earth before sunrise[12], so the moon replaces the sun at night and supports the nightly sky as a Pillar-god[13].

The epithet “Pillar of Hēḥ” given to Osiris in the hymn of Horemheb reminds one of an architectural element characteristic for the Memphite tomb-chapels of the New Kingdom, viz. the so-called Memphite Djed-pillars. These are square pillars decorated in relief on one or more sides with a djed-symbol often supported by the deceased tomb-owner on his hands or shoulders[14]. At present 35 examples are known to me and these are all of Ramesside date. As far as their provenance has been recorded, they come from Saqqara, but there can be little doubt that the others derive from the same necropolis, especially since a number of them can be connected with other monuments known to have been found at Saqqara.

The following list is arranged roughly in chronologically order, starting with pillars assigned to the reign of Seti I or the early years of Ramesses II on account of their use of raised relief for at least part of their decoration. Then follow those from the middle and the end of the reign of Ramesses II and those for which it is at present impossible to give a more exact date than the 19th Dynasty in general. Some of the latter may be even later than that, although monuments of the 20th Dynasty are comparatively rare at Saqqara. The last datable example is the pillar of the High Priest of P丫头 Hori, son and successor of Khaemwaset II; this Hori may have lived into the beginning of the 20th Dynasty. Pillars deriving from one and the same tomb are numbered 1a, 1b etc.; future excavations will doubtless supplement incomplete sets or single examples with their missing counterparts, and these can be added to the list more easily when such a numbering system is used.

1a-d. P丫头mosi, Leiden AP 51a-d, temp. Ramesses II (early), PM III/2, 714. From the few pillars which can be studied in situ it appears that their decoration is orientated towards the innermost part of the tomb in the same way as the texts inscribed on obelisks are directed to that of a temple[15]; see Fig.1. In most cases two sides are decorated with djed-symbols. Assuming that the central axis of the tomb runs from east to west, the sides of the pillars showing the djed-symbol

7. Cf. Hornung 1976, 53-54; 60. For all details concerning the following quotations from the hymn see the commentary forthcoming in The Memphite Tomb of Horemheb, Vol. I.
8. On Osiris and the moon see Derchain 1962, 44-46.
10. Van Dijk, in Martin 1984, 11-12.
14. Both Osiris and Atum, the setting sun, are sometimes given the epithet ḫḥ pr r ḫḥ “who separates heaven and earth”, see the references given in the forthcoming commentary (cf. note 7 above).
16. See Yoyotte 1957, 81-82.
are the east and west faces, whereas the north and south faces are decorated with adorning figures of the deceased and/or inscriptions. Pillars belonging to this type can thus be divided into "southern" and "northern" examples. Of the pillars of Ptahmosi preserved in Leiden three belong to the "southern" and only one (AP 51a) to the "northern" type. From this it appears that there must have been at least six djed-pillars in the tomb of Ptahmosi. For other monuments from this Memphite tomb see now Berlandini 1982.

2. Kema (son of) Para'emheb, Bologna 1892, early Dyn. 19, PM III²/2, 751. See Betrò 1980. The relation between Kema and Para'emheb, who both bear the same title imy-r ḫnwty, is not stated on the pillar; in fact both names may refer to one and the same person. Side 3 of this pillar is inscribed with the same text as our no. 1a, side 3. Three blocks decorated in raised relief and mentioning the imy-r ḫnwty Para'emheb as the tomb-owner's son or brother were found reused in the temple of Nectanebo II at North-Saqqara, see Martin 1979, nos. 130-132.

3. Neferhotep, Cairo JE 18928, early Dyn. 19, PM III²/2, 755. See Kákosy 1980, Pl. 7,1-3; Berlandini 1981, Pl. 9. A fragment showing part of the top of three sides. The pillar is exceptional in that one of the djed-symbols is surmounted by a Hathor head with a sistrum crown.

4. Iurokhy, Cairo JE 65061, temp. Seti I - early Ramesses II, PM III²/2, 661. From Lepsius' tomb no.25. For the monuments of Iurokhy and his family see Ruffe/Kitchen 1979.

5. Khonsu Pawadj, BM 36237, early Dyn. 19, unpublished, see Pl. 1.1 18. Four thin slabs (approximate thickness 2-3 cms.) forming one side of a djed-pillar. H. 147 cms., width ca. 37 cms. Acquired in 1925 from a French dealer. The provenance of the piece is unknown, but the iconography and the inscription (Fig.2a) referring to "(Ptah), the Great (God), South-of-his-Wall, Lord of 'Ankh-tawy' leave little doubt that it comes from Saqqarah. The pillar shows the tomb-owner kneeling and supporting on his right shoulder and left hand a large djed-symbol, whereas his right hand is raised in adoration. He is dressed in a long garment and wears a long wig which covers his ears, a broad collar, and elegant sandals with upturned toes. The djed-symbol

17. The orientation of pillars not found in situ showing djed-symbols on all four sides is obviously much more difficult to establish. A proper archaeological study of the pillars (and a study of their typology in connection with this) must be postponed till future excavations at Saqqara will have revealed more pillars in situ.

18. I am very grateful to Mr. T.G.H. James, Keeper in the Department of Egyptian Antiquities in the British Museum, for bringing this monument to my attention and for permission to publish it here.

19. This type of sandal appears to be an innovation of the Ramesside Period, see McDonald 1982, 177-178, who men-
is surmounted by two human-headed birds (doubtless originally with sun-discs on their heads) which are sitting on a square pedestal. Below the four horizontal projections at the top of the djed is a large wst-collar having at each end a terminal in the form of a hawk’s head. A vertical text, now barely legible, is inscribed on the lower half of the djed, reading "The Osiris, the имy-r st (? Khonsu, true of voice, (also called?) Pawadj" (Fig. 2b). The decoration of the pillar faces left and has been executed in raised relief, though the inscriptions are in sunk relief (text a on a raised panel, as often in late 18th and early 19th Dyn. reliefs from Saqqāra).

Iryiry, Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek, ΑΕΙΝ. 45, temp. Ramesses II, PM III 2/2, 756. Provenance unrecorded, but undoubtedly from Saqqāra. Facsimile drawings will be published in G.T. Martin’s Corpus of Reliefs of the New Kingdom from the Memphite Necropolis and Lower Egypt, Vol. I (forthcoming), no. 84.

7a-e. Mosi, Sydney, Nicholson Museum, and
7f. Mosi, Cairo TN 22.5.25.1, temp. Ramesses II, PM III 2/2, 554. See Nicholson 1891, 95-105, Pls. 1-4; Gaballa 1977, 18-20, Pls. 41-47; Málek 1981, Pl. 17. In his publication of the remains of Mosi’s tomb, Gaballa followed an earlier suggestion by Anthes that Nicholson’s blocks D and E belong to one and the same pillar. Nicholson himself had stated that these blocks “belong to different piers”, however, and there is no reason to doubt his judgement. As is often the case with Memphite djed-pillars, those of Mosi were composed of several blocks fitted together. The remains of Nicholson’s pillars A and B each consist of two blocks joining directly onto each other. In contrast with this, a “slice” of ca. 7,5 cms. is missing between blocks D and E. Since it is unlikely that originally there was a limestone block of such small dimensions between D and E, or, alternatively, that a layer of gypsum of 7,5 cms. thick was used to join the two blocks, I think it is highly probable that Nicholson was right in assuming that D and E do not belong to the same pillar. When Loret re-discovered the tomb he noted two square pillars (or pillar bases?) in Gaballa’s Room I (see Loret 1899). The five pillar fragments in Sydney, which show djed-symbols on two sides and adorning figures on the others, obviously belong together and may have stood in a modest peristyle court located to the south of the remains planned by Loret, who cannot have seen these pillars because they had been removed from the tomb long before he re-discovered it. The Cairo pillar is of a different type, showing djed-symbols on all four sides. The orientation of its decoration proves that it must have been one of a pair at the least, and not a single pillar, as assumed by Gaballa and Málek. I would suggest, therefore, that the Cairo pillar is one of the pair seen by Loret in Room I, now also in the Cairo Museum. This is not the place to discuss the merits of the different reconstructions of the tomb proposed by Gaballa.
and Málek, but it may be pointed out that the decorative scheme of the djed-pillars, not taken into account by either of the two, might throw interesting new light on the problem. Thus it would seem to me that two of the Sydney pillars (Nicholson's A and C) were not only orientated in agreement with the central east-west axis of the tomb, but also with a south-north axis, since they have djed-pillars on two adjoining faces and not on opposite sides as usual (and as on Nicholson's pillars B, D and E). This observation may agree with Loret's statement that there was a doorway in the south wall of the open court (cf. Gaballa 1977, 4).

8. Pahemmeter, Florence 2607, temp. Ramesses II (probably), PM III²/2, 709. The "north" and "south" sides show the usual adoring figures, but in this case the tomb-owner carries a procession standard of Sakhmet as well. From unknown location at Saqqâra.

9a-d. Amenemone, in situ in his tomb, temp. Ramesses II, unpublished. The tomb of Amenemone, high steward of the Ramessseum and private secretary of the Lord of the Two Lands (sfr s3 n nb-tawy), is situated immediately to the west of the Monastery of Apa Jeremias, adjacent to the south-wall of the tomb of Neferrenpet. These and several smaller tombs were partially excavated in 1977 by an expedition of Cairo University led by Prof. Soad Maher, see Leclant 1978, 278. The tomb of Amenemone contains four djed-pillars, decorated with a djed-symbol on all four sides, and arranged in two pairs. They are located in a room facing the east side of a limestone pyramid, presumably the central cult-room of the tomb. The owner is probably identical with the Amenemone of a statue in the Hermitage, Leningrad (Inv. No.738), who bears the same titles, see Kitchen 1980, 210-211.

10a-e. Tia, in situ in his tomb, with additional fragments in EES/Leiden site magazine, temp. Ramesses II; cf. PM III²/2, 654-655 and Málek 1974, 161. The tomb of Tia is situated in the area between the Monastery of Apa Jeremias and the Enclosure of Sekhemkhet, adjacent to the north-wall of the tomb of Horemheb, see the preliminary reports in Martin 1983 and 1984. Excavation of the tomb revealed six square pillar bases, see the plan in Martin 1984, 6. On two of these the lower half of djed-pillars were found in situ, whereas a third one could be reassembled from several large fragments. Additional fragments were found of two of the remaining three pillars.


12. NN, Munich ÄS 2971, Dyn. 19 (probably), PM III²/2, 760. Fragment of the lower half of a djed-pillar (one side only). The elongated proportions of the figure of the deceased, his dress as well as the form of the hieroglyphs point to a 19th-Dynasty date and would seem to exclude the date given in Staatliche Sammlung 1976, 102 (end of Dyn. 18).

13. 'Akhpet, in magazine at Saqqâra, Dyn. 19, PM III²/2, 558. From a tomb excavated in 1966 by the French mission at Saqqâra in the Teti Pyramid Cemetery, to the east of the pyramid temple of Teti, see Lauer 1966, 32-34 and Leclant 1966, 15.

14a-b. Kyiry, Cairo JE 43270a-b, Dyn. 19, PM III²/2, 668. Reused in the Monastery of Apa Jeremias and presumably from a tomb in the necropolis to the west of the Monastery.

15. Amenhotep Pendua, Cairo TN 20.1.25.5, Dyn. 19, PM III²/2, 755. The identity of the "scribe of the treasury of Ptah and W  of all the gods of Hwt-(K3-)Pth, Amenhotep", who is shown adoring on one side of this pillar (see Pl. 1.23), and the "scribe Pendua" carrying the djed-symbol on another side (see Bruyère 1952a,117 fig.11) is uncertain. Since the deceased is always supporting the djed himself it seems likely that Amenhotep and Pendua are just two names of one and the same man rather than two different persons. According to the Temporary Register of the Cairo Museum, the pillar, which measures 187 cms. in height, is decorated with a djed-symbol on one side only. No provenance is given there, but it comes almost certainly from Saqqâra.

16a-c. Amenmosi, in EES/Leiden site magazine at Saqqâra, Dyn. 19. From a dismantled tomb exca-

22. After this article had been written the excavations of Cairo University were resumed in the spring of 1984 under the direction of Prof. Sayed Tawfik. Several of the important Ramesside tombs unearthed by this expedition, including that of the vizier Neferrenpet, contain djed-pillars.

23. Photograph published by kind permission of Dr Mohammed Saleh, Director of the Cairo Museum.
vated in 1981, the remains of which are located to
the south-west of the tomb-chapel of Ra'ia. 
Apart from one complete pillar showing a djed-
symbol supported by the deceased on three sides, 
six fragments belonging to at least two more 
pillars were found. See now Martin 1985, 17-19 
nos. xi-xii, pls. 25, 28-29.
17. Hori, Cairo JE 43271, late Dyn. 19-early Dyn. 20, 
PM III 2/2, 715. See for the provenance of this 
pillar nos. 14a-b above.

Outside Saqqâra the motif of a djed-symbol sup-
ported by the deceased is found only rarely, and there 
it occurs not on pillars but on doorjams. The only 
example from a Theban tomb known to me is found in 
TT 158 (Tjanefer), where it is found on the doorjams of 
the innermost room which contained a small shrine, 
presumably of Osiris.24 Another non-Memphite example is 
a relief-block with part of a doorjamb from the tomb 
of Minnose at Abydos.25 At Saqqâra the motif is found 
on doorjams as well, as in the small tomb-chapel of the 
chief-singer of Ptah Ra'ia discovered by the EES/Leiden 
Expedition in 1981, but there the figure of the deceased 
supporting the djed is lacking.

A first attempt to establish the meaning of the 
Memphite djed-pillar was made a few years ago by Maria 
Carmela Betró.27 According to her this type of pillar 
shares the symbolism of the pillar in general as support 
of the sky and, in a funerary context, as a means of 
ascending to heaven. This symbolism is emphasized on 
the Memphite pillars by the representation of the djed as 
a symbol of the resurrected Osiris. What distinguishes the 
Memphite djed-pillar from other types of pillar, however, 
is the kneeling figure of the deceased supporting the djed.

This figure, according to the author, depicts the deceased 
in the attitude of the $h\h$-symbol for "millions of years" 
ownen in the context of the Sed-festival. In her 
her opinion it is the Memphite ritual of erecting the djed (s' $h$' 
gdl) enacted at dawn of the Sed-festival which forms the 
basis of the symbolism of the pillars: they show the 
deceased erecting the djed and by doing this he participates 
in the Sed-festival as an expression of his devotion to 
the King and his cult.28

A relation between the Memphite djed-pillars and 
the ritual of erecting the djed is quite probable, although texts inscribed on the pillars never mention 
the ritual. One might also object that the djed was not erected in the manner depicted on the pillars, but pulled 
up from a lying into a standing position either manually 
or by means of a rope.30 On the other hand, the earliest 
representation of the related ritual of "Lifting up Hea-
ven", frequently found in Graeco-Roman temples and 
there called $tw\h$ $pt$, shows Ramesses II supporting the 
sky with his hands and calls this s' $h$' $pt$. It is therefore 
not inconceivable that the attitude of supporting the djed 
as shown on the pillars could have been called s' $h$' gdl. 
Moreover, the earliest depiction of the ritual of erecting 
the djed is a vignette accompanying the texts of the 
Ramesseum Dramatic Papyrus, and here the ritual is not 
shown in the way familiar to us from later representations, 
but the djed is raised in an upright position upon 
the hands of two "royal acquaintances". This does not 
mean, however, that the Memphite pillars are specially 
related to the Sed-festival. Egyptian texts inform us that 
the ritual of erecting the djed was connected with the 
final stages of the burial of Osiris and therefore with his 
resurrection. As such it is only natural that it was incor-
porated in the ceremonies of the Sed-festival. But there is 
no evidence that the enactment of the ritual was restric-
ted to the celebration of the Sed-festival; on the contrary, 
it seems to have been an annual event, taking place 
ideally on the last day of the fourth month of the 
Inundation season. In the texts inscribed on the Memphi-
te djed-pillars there is not the slightest allusion to the 
Sed-festival, unless the isolated occurrence of the names 
of Ramesses II on one of them (no. 6) be taken as such.

The deceased tomb-owner supporting the djed 
indeed represents a $h\h$-figure, but it is not so much the 
"Millions-of-years" symbol that is meant, but the god 
Heh who supports heaven, or Shu, the Heh-god par 
excellence. The pose of the deceased is similar to that 
shown by Heh and Shu, or by the King when he "lifts up 
heaven". Some Third Intermediate Period collins actually 
show the god Shu supporting not the sky, but the djed.34 
Shu, the Pillar-god, may be depicted himself as a Djed-
symbol. In the tomb of Kha'bekhenet at Deir el-Medina 
the usual pair of lions (Shu and Tefnut) upon whose 
back the Sun-god arises from the horizon is replaced by a 
djed-symbol and one lion called Tefnut.35 The activity of 
the deceased reflects that of the djed itself, which, like the

26. Martin 1985, II and pls. 16, 18, 21, 23.
30. Van de Walle 1954, 287.
32. Helek 1968, scene 27.
33. Sethe 1929, Pl. 4 and 15 (scene 9).
34. Gauthier 1913, PIs. 18 (CG 41055) and 29 (CG 41070).
35. Bruyère 1952b, Pl. 3: cf. Saleh 1984, 18 n.76 and fig. 20.
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The second name of the djed on the Memphite pillars is "Ptah the Great Nut", an epithet which does not occur before the Ramesside period and which is also found as designation of Tatenen, the third name of the djed. What these gods, nwn wr and tıpnu, have in common is that they both receive the setting sun and raise it upon their arms from the primaeval waters in the morning. For Nun the classical reference is the final vignette of the Book of Gates. Here the Sun-god in his boat is lifted upon the arms of a god who is emerging from the primaeval waters; the god is called Nun, and the legend explains: "These arms emerge from the water and they raise this god". In other NK funerary compositions it is Tatenen who has the same role, e.g. in the Litany of Rê, where the King says: "O Osiris, I am your son, you have assigned to me your government, you make me appear as a Pillar-god... I go to rest in the Duat, I have power over the deep darkness (wšlw), I enter it and come forth from it, the arms of Tatenen receive me and lift me up", or in the Book of the Dead: "You go to rest in life in the nightly sky, your father Tatenen lifts you up, he closes his arms around you while you come into being and become a god within the earth". A late hymn to the moon as nocturnal sun says: "Hail to you, Pillar is your name, you lengthen the life of King Ptoleny... you are this Tatenen, great of forms, the beloved, long of beard, Great Encircler who encircles the Nine Bows; when the Sun-disc arises it rests upon his arms".

From these quotations it appears that the Memphite djed-pillars are a special architectural variant of the

36. Sokar occurs only in combination with Osiris and Ptah (nos. 1b, 2 and 17).
37. Sandman-Holmberg 1946, 75-79; 108-112.
38. E.g., nos. 3, 7c, 16a.
40. Mariette 1889, 113; cf. also 414.
42. Sandman-Holmberg 1946, 161. An exception occurs on a 19th-Dyn. naophorous statue in the Metropolitan Museum, New York (MMA 33.3.1), which shows Osiris flanked by two djed-symbols with Ba-birds, see Hayes 1959, 351, fig. 219.
43. Quoted by Kurth 1975, 98.
44. Junker 1917, 64.
47. Sandman-Holmberg 1946, 115-120; Schöfl 1980, 62 n. 47.
48. Often reproduced from Bonomi/Sharp 1864, Pl. 15.
50. BD 15B III; Schöfl 1980, 35.
51. Selhe/Firekow 1957, 93 [115]; prwr wr here replaces jn wr, a rare epithet of Tatenen, see Schöfl 1980, 70-72 (another example in Anthes 1965, 62, Frag. 3 and Pl. 23a).
vignette called Chapter 16 of the Book of the Dead which illustrates the hymns to Rê of Ch. 15 and shows how the Sun-god is received "in life" (m "nh) by the arms of the djed when he enters the Duat, and at the same time how he is raised to the sky upon the arms of the djed when he rises in the morning. The BD vignette accompanies hymns to Rê and Osiris, and the pillars are also inscribed with such hymns. In this vignette, as on many of the Saqqâra pillars, the djed is called Osiris, and textual evidence confirms that Osiris himself may replace Nun or Tatenen in raising the Sun-god upon his arms. Thus a passage from pCh. Beatty IX (rt. 6.1) says that after Rê and Osiris have become one god in the Duat Re' "arises from the arms of his father Osiris". In a NK ritual text it is also said that "his father Osiris lifts him up" to the sky. In this text the King acts as priest of the Sun-god who maintains cosmic order (ms'it) by reciting the "liturgical cosmography" which describes the celestial journey of the Sun-god culminating in his resurrection. The King is the living image of the god, and from this it is only a small step to identify the King with the djed which carries the Sun-god. On the djed-pillar of Iiryry (no. 6 of our list) the djed is inscribed with the cartouches of Ramesses II.

In the Second Hypostyle Hall of the temple of Seti I at Abydos two pilasters are decorated with large djed-symbols flanked by double images of the King wearing the White Crown (south wall) and the Red Crown (north wall). The djed is adorned with a wshy-collar and a pectoral. On the southern pilaster the pectoral contains a cryptographic writing of the name Men-ma'at-Rê combined with images of Rê and Osiris, whereas the pectoral on the northern pilaster shows the same name written in the normal way together with depictions of two human-headed Ba-birds. The texts inscribed on the djed-symbol call it "Osiris-Khentamentiu, Tatenen-who-dwells-in-Abydos, Wenemefer in his true name of King Men-ma'at-Rê (m ruf ms' nsw-bity Mn-ms'rs'-R')" on the southern pilaster, and "Osiris-Khentamentiu, Wenemenfer-Lord of Ti-gsr, Djed Shepsy-who-dwells-in-Abydos, King (...) Men-ma'at-Rê" on its northern counterpart. Similar representations exist in the temple of Ramesses II at Abydos, where they are found on the square pillars in the Second Octostyle Hall and in Rooms X and XIV (Pl. 2.1). Three of the walls in each of the latter rooms contain three niches, and the walls between them have been decorated with djed-symbols, at least in the case of the rear walls, for much of the decoration of these rooms has disappeared (Pl. 2.2). The texts on the djed-symbols have been painted in red (now very faint) on a yellow background. Most of these texts have disappeared together with the upper parts of the djed-symbols themselves, but one of them (Room XIV, second djed from the left) begins with "Ptah, Djed Shepsy, Osiris [...]". The niches themselves contain reliefs which appear to have been similar to those in the Osiris Hall of the temple of Seti I and which may once have included the scene showing the ritual of erecting the djed. A room containing niches with djed-symbols depicted on the walls between them is also found in the Osiris complex (Room 24) in the south wing of the temple of Medinet Habu, dedicated to the mortuary cult of the deified King Ramesses III. It is tempting to assume that it was in these recessed rooms at Abydos and Medinet Habu that the ritual of erecting the djed took place. The same may have been true of the so-called contiguous temples which replace the Osiris complex in the royal mortuary temples from Amenhotep III to the end of the 19th Dynasty.

After this brief diversion we must return to the Memphite djed-pillars. We can now see a clear relation between these pillars and the Hymn to Osiris in the tomb of Horemheb. The hymn addresses Osiris as "Tatenen, Founder of the shores, Djed Shepsy who rules over eternity"; it states explicitly that the Sun-god (called mky "the Turquoise One") is upon the arms of Osiris. Both Horemheb's hymn and the pillars deal with the unified
Rê' and Osiris and both mention Orion as visible proof of the rejuvenated Rê'-Osiris. A brief passage from the hymn is quoted in the introductory hymns in the Book of the Dead of Ani which are illustrated by the vignette called Ch. 16 60. When moreover the hymn of Horemheb addresses Osiris as “Pillar of Hêh, wide of breast (wsh šnbt)”, this sounds like an almost literal description of the Memphite djed-pillar which is supported by the deceased in the attitude of Hêh and which is adorned in a great many cases with a large wsh-collar 61.

That the Memphite djed-pillar raises the resurrected Sun-god is also proven by the appearance of the two Ba-birds with sun-discs on their heads which are a distinctive element in the iconography of dd šps. These have been discussed by L. Kâkûs 62, who suggested that, although the Ba-birds are always anonymous with the exception of a late representation in the temple of Hibis, where they are called Shu and Tefnut, they may well be the result of “the gradual fusion of the cosmogonical concepts of Heliopolis and Memphis”, since the Bas of Heliopolis are called Rê’, Shu and Tefnut already in the Coffin Texts, and in a NK gloss to BD 17 the Bas of Shu and Tefnut are mentioned 63. The evidence of the Memphite djed-pillars would seem to corroborate this interpretation. The two Ba-birds with sun-discs upon their heads are the two Bas of Rê’ resulting from his unification with Osiris. In the older version of the BD passage referred to above the deceased says: “I am He with the two Bas within his two Fledglings”; a gloss explains that “He with the two Bas” is “Osiris when he entered Busiris (dwb) and found the Bas of Rê’ there; then one embraced the other and they became He with the two Bas” (CT IV 277-281). The two Fledglings are explained as Harendotes and Horus of Letopolis, but the BD gloss calls them Shu and Tefnut. In later texts ḫw.f.w “his two Fledglings” is often used as “designation of Shu and Tefnut as children of Rê’” 64 and these are connected with dd šps in Kom Ombo, “the city of jubilation of Rê’ when he is united with his two Fledglings” and “the great palace of the majesty of dd šps” 65. An interesting text from Abu Simbel says that Ramesses II is “like Khepri when he appears as Shu and Tefnut upon the arms of Horus-Tatenen in order to found Egypt” 66. The representation of the two Ba-birds on top of the djed does not occur before the 19th Dynasty, and the evidence added here suggests that they were indeed called Shu and Tefnut already in this period.

Religious symbols are almost by definition sensible of many interpretations because they refer to the other world, a world which no eye has seen and which therefore remains in essence concealed and unknown. Like the words which compose a language, symbols cannot be fully understood without their proper context. Egyptian texts sometimes give completely different, and from our point of view even contradictory, names to the djed-symbol. That the djed could represent the resurrected Osiris and therefore symbolize resurrection, stability and endurance is so familiar to us, that we tend to forget that this is only one of the possibilities, albeit one of the most common ones. But when the triumph of Osiris over his enemies was envisaged, the Egyptians could also say that the djed represented Seth, the arch-enemy of Osiris who had to carry Osiris, the god who was greater than he 68. And when the emphasis was on the rebirth of Osiris as the child Horus, the djed could be called Hathor, “the female djed which concealed Rê’ from his enemies” as Isis concealed Horus from Seth in the papyrus thicket of the Delta 69. On the Memphite djed-pillars the main forces that assist in the resurrection of Osiris and the rebirth of Rê’ are symbolized by calling the djed Ptah 70, Tatenen, Djed Shepsy and Nun, all of them gods connected with creation and sunrise. The pillars represent a symbol of the creation of light; the djed depicted on them brings light by raising the sky above the earth and by lifting up the Sun-god above the Horizon. Within the context of a tomb both will have been thought of as situated in the first place in the hereafter, i.e. the djed supports the nightly sky or the sky in the Netherworld and it raises the Sun-god above the Horizon when he enters the Netherworld.

The deceased tomb-owner exalting dd šps, be it literally as on the pillars or by reciting a hymn to Osiris—

60. Budge 1895, 10 (PL 2, 8-10); Budge 1909, PL 7.
61. E.g., nos. 5, 7a-e, 9a-d, 13, 15.
62. Kâkûs 1980. Some other representations beside those mentioned by Kâkûs are: naephorous statue of Ra’ia, Leiden AST 11 (PL 5), see Boeser 1913, 11, from Saqqâra, cf. van Dijk 1968, 51 with n. 14 (no. 3); statue of Ptah, Cairo CG 38432, see Daressy 1906, PL 25; wall-scene in the court of Herihor, temple of Khonsu, Karnak, see Epigraphic Survey 1979, PL 45.
63. Kâkûs 1980, 52. A late ms. of BD 142 mentions dd šps m ḫn wí R’, see Allen 1960, PL 49.
64. Cf. The vignette in the BD of Ani, which shows the Ba-birds of Rê’ and Osiris seated before two large djed-symbols, see e.g. Budge 1909, 102; Rosier 1979, 37 (13).
68. Sethe 1929, 153-154; cf. Frankfort 1948, 387 n. 84.
69. Frankfort 1948, 178.
70. Cf. Ptah’s role of support of heaven, attested since the NK (ḏ pt), see Kurth 1975, 82-83; 102-103. It is precisely Ptb ḫ pt n ntrw who is depicted in the temple of Hibis carrying the sky and flanked by djed-symbols with the Ba-birds Shu and Tefnut.
dd spsy as in the tomb of Horemheb, assists in the separation of heaven and earth and in the raising of the Sun-god. By doing this he creates the preconditions necessary to enable him to participate in the eternal cosmic cycle of death and resurrection.

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2. Djed-piller of Amenhotep Penduu, Cairo TN 20.1.25.5 no. 15. Courtesy of the Egyptian Museum, Cairo.
1. Abydos, Temple of Ramesses II: Room XIV, southern pillar, south face. Photograph J. van Dijk.

3. Naophorous statue of Ra’is, Leiden AST 11, showing on the left side of the naos a djed-symbol with the Ba-birds of the united Re’ and Osiris.