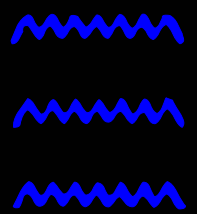
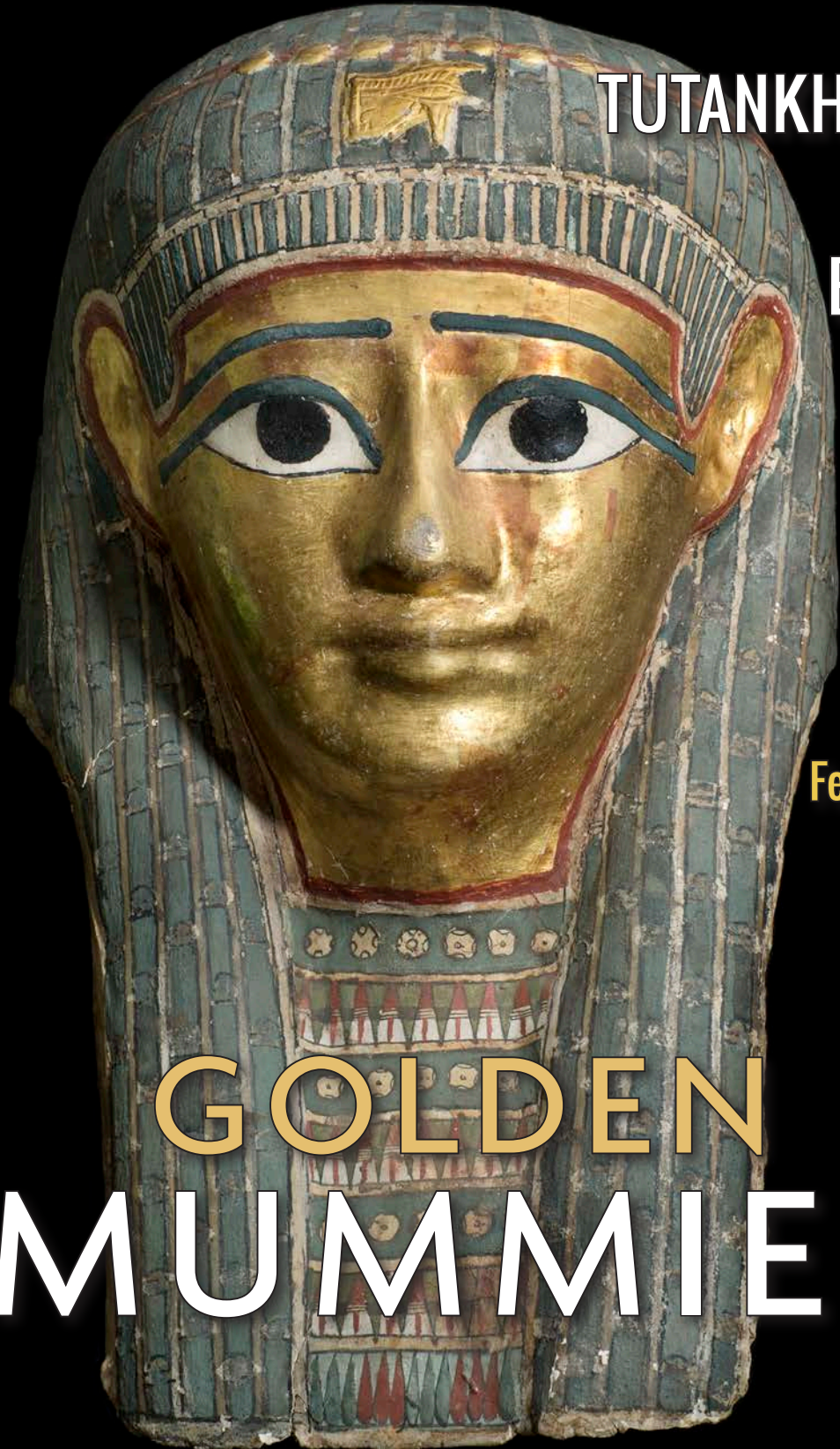


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BECAUSE YOU LOVE ANCIENT EGYPT



TUTANKHAMUN'S TOMB

The Latest Discovery

EGYPT IN ROME

**The Royal City of
RAMESSES II**

**Egyptian Gods and
CHILDBIRTH**

**Ferocity & the Feminine
FELINE DEITIES**

**Ancient Egyptian
JEWELRY**

**GOLDEN
MUMMIES**

PHOTO: JULIA THORNE



NILE



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FEROCITY AND THE FEMININE

Jacqueline Thurston

Why did the ancient Egyptians choose formidable feminine deities as guardians of the pharaoh?

Jacqueline Thurston investigates, focussing on the realm of lionesses, lions, and sphinxes.



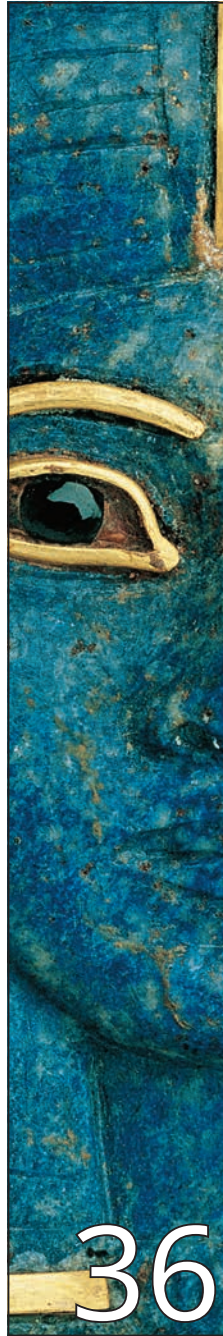
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PIRAMESSES

Nicky Nielsen

In its heyday, Ramesses II's purpose-built city, PiramesSES, was Egypt's largest and wealthiest. Then it disappeared.

Dr. Nicky Nielsen continues his series on the royal capitals in the Nile Delta.



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ANCIENT EGYPTIAN JEWELRY

Nigel Fletcher-Jones

Jewelry was worn by ancient Egyptians at every level of society. **Nigel Fletcher-Jones** highlights some of the masterpieces featured in his new book on the topic.



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CHILD-BIRTH IN ANCIENT EGYPT

Vanessa Foott

In ancient Egypt, birth was viewed as an incredibly dangerous time for both mother and child. Commoner and royalty alike would turn to magical spells and objects to keep evil forces at bay.



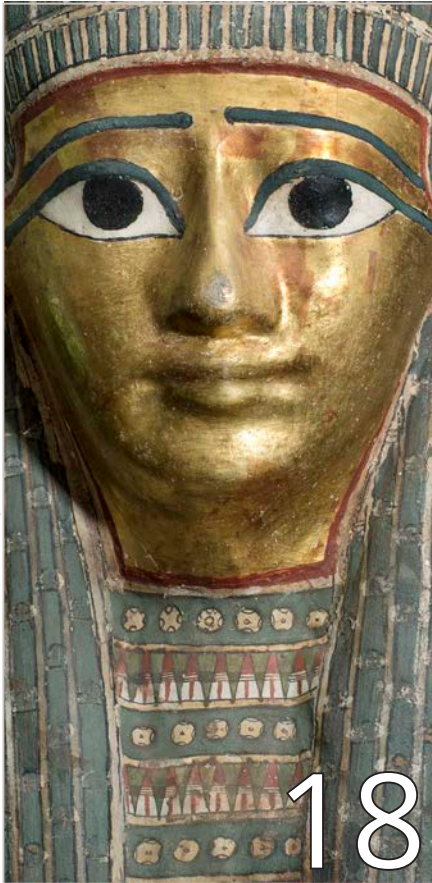
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EGYPT IN ROME

Rebecca Batley

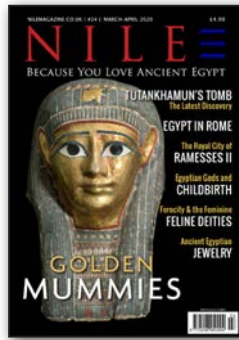
In 31 B.C. the forces of Mark Anthony and Cleopatra fell to Octavian and Rome at the Battle of Actium. **Rebecca Batley** looks at Egypt's subsequent ongoing influence over Rome, and the propaganda campaign against Cleopatra.

NILE



MANCHESTER MUSEUM, ACC. NO. 2121. PHOTO: JULIA THORNE

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THE COVER

GOLDEN MUMMIES

Campbell Price

Manchester Museum's new exhibition examines the Graeco-Roman golden mummies discovered in the Faiyum by Flinders Petrie. Our cover features a shining example: a gilded cartonnage mummy mask from el-Lahun.

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FROM THE EDITOR

HI THERE! I'm Jeff Burzacott, the editor and publisher of NILE Magazine. I have the great privilege of putting together each and every issue for you. This is me at Medinet Habu: the fabulous royal worship temple of Ramesses III at Luxor.

As a reader (thank you), you may be interested in learning a little bit of why we do what we do at NILE, where your magazine is heading next, and what NILE's beginnings have to do with Italian opera. One of our favourite authors, Sharon Hague, recently invited me to be interviewed as part of her "Stars of Egyptology series. You can find it here: <https://sharonjanethague.com/interview-with-jeff-burzacott-nile-magazine/>.

I'm also usually the reason why any issue is late. And it's always for a good reason. This time, it's because of the breaking news about the latest scans around KV 62—the Tomb of Tutankhamun. It appears they have found



© JEFFREY ROSS BURZACOTT

a new corridor-shaped void which may change the way we view Tutankhamun's tomb—again. There wasn't a whole lot of information in the original *Nature* article, so I wanted to give you more detail from the man whose "tomb within a tomb theories" started

this investigation: Dr. Nicholas Reeves. That report is on page 6. So, welcome (finally) to issue #24. As always, I hope you love your NILE time!

Jeff Burzacott 
editor@nilemagazine.com.au

NEW SCANS HINT AT MORE TO TUT'S TOMB

IS KV 62 EVEN BIGGER THAN WE THOUGHT?



IMAGE: SEAN M. SMITH/SHUTTERSTOCK

Tutankhamun's golden funerary mask glows in the filtered sunlight at Cairo's Egyptian Museum.

While Tutankhamun's tomb (KV 62) is famous around the world for the fabulous golden treasures discovered inside, Egyptologist Dr. Nicholas Reeves proposes that KV 62 actually began life as a queen's tomb. If his theory is correct, then the original occupant—Queen Nefertiti—may still be interred in

a section of the tomb sealed off by a false partition wall.

Even the famous golden mask may be a hand-me-down from the famous queen who didn't need it anymore; Reeves' other contention is that Nefertiti survived her religious reforming husband, Akhenaten, to rule Egypt in her own right as pharaoh. As "king", she would have been interred in grander, pharaonic style, befitting her status.

THE CASE FOR ADDITIONAL chambers within the Tomb of King Tutankhamun (KV 62) appears to have been bolstered by the results of recent ground-penetrating radar (GPR) scans above and around the tomb.

The scans, conducted by U.K. geophysical survey company Terravision Exploration, suggest the presence of a large void in the direct vicinity of KV 62. The void's size and position indicate that it may be connected

with Tutankhamun's famous tomb.

A report on the findings was submitted to Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities in February this year, with a copy sighted by the scientific journal *Nature*, who initially reported on the anomaly.

The space is significant; it appears to be around two metres high and at least ten metres long. Intriguingly, the GPR data shows that the anomaly is at the same depth as Tutankhamun's Burial Chamber, and runs

parallel with the KV 62 entrance corridor (see an approximation on the opposite page).

So, what was Terravision looking for? According to British Egyptologist Nicholas Reeves, nothing less than the untouched burial of the tomb's original owner, Queen Nefertiti.

Five years ago, Reeves, published his evidence suggesting that Tutankhamun's burial place was actually a tomb within a tomb. At a subsequent press conference, Reeves explained

NEW DISCOVERY

MUMMIFIED LION CUBS AT SAQQARA

ONLY THE SECOND TIME MUMMIFIED LIONS HAVE BEEN FOUND



Egypt's Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, Dr. Mostafa Waziry, carries out one of the lion cub mummies discovered in a tomb in the Bubasteion precinct at Saqqara.

ALTHOUGH LIONS ARE REPRESENTED in pharaonic art and inscriptions, mummified lions are pretty rare—up until last year, only one had ever been found. That single case was in November 2001, when the skeletonised remains of the mummy of an adult male lion were found by a French mission in the Tomb of Tutankhamun's wet nurse, Maia, at Saqqara.

During the Ptolemaic Period (332–30 B.C.), around a thousand years after Tutankhamun's reign, Maia's tomb was opened and pressed into service as a catacomb for thousands of cat mummies—plus one lion. In Late and Hellenistic Egypt, the area around the tomb, today known as the Bubasteion, was dedicated to the goddess Bastet, with most of the tombs there reused as burial places for cat mummies.

On November 23 last year, Egypt's Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, Dr. Mostafa Waziry, announced that an Egyptian team, working in the Bubasteion necropolis, had discovered at least two mummified lion cubs. These were dated to the Late Period's 26th Dynasty (ca. 600 B.C.). Each lion cub mummy is around 90 cm long, and may have been considered as an incarnation of the lion god Mahes, son of the goddess Sekhmet or Bastet.

The Egyptian team is hopeful that the find may lead to the discovery of the area where the young lions were bred.



While animal mummies often contain only parts of the animal suggested by their shape (or even no parts at all), scans reveal that the recently discovered lion mummies are 100% lion. The two lion cubs were found in a tomb also containing a number of cat mummies and statues.

Ferocity AND THE Feminine



*A rosette pattern ornaments the straps of the garment covering Sekhmet's breasts.
Bust of Sekhmet, Brooklyn Museum.*

JACQUELINE THURSTON

Why did the ancient Egyptians choose formidable feminine deities as guardians of the pharaoh? Perhaps their ferocity and intimate connection with death were counterbalanced by their fecundity and capacity to bring forth new life.

Our contemporary interest in gender and identity makes the exploration of the attributes of both feminine and masculine deities in the ancient Egyptian pantheon an intriguing study.

The following excerpts, adapted from this author's recently-published book, *Sacred Deities of Ancient Egypt*, focus on the realm of lionesses, lions, and sphinxes, and the distinction between feminine and masculine deities.

All photos, unless otherwise credited, are courtesy of the author.

majestic deity was portrayed with the head of a lioness and the body of an elegant woman. The lioness deity Sekhmet was the beneficent and wrathful protector of the pharaoh and his kingdom. When desert windstorms filled with stinging sand particles scorched the fields and turned midday to dusk, ancient Egyptians believed they felt the hot breath of Sekhmet blowing in their midst.

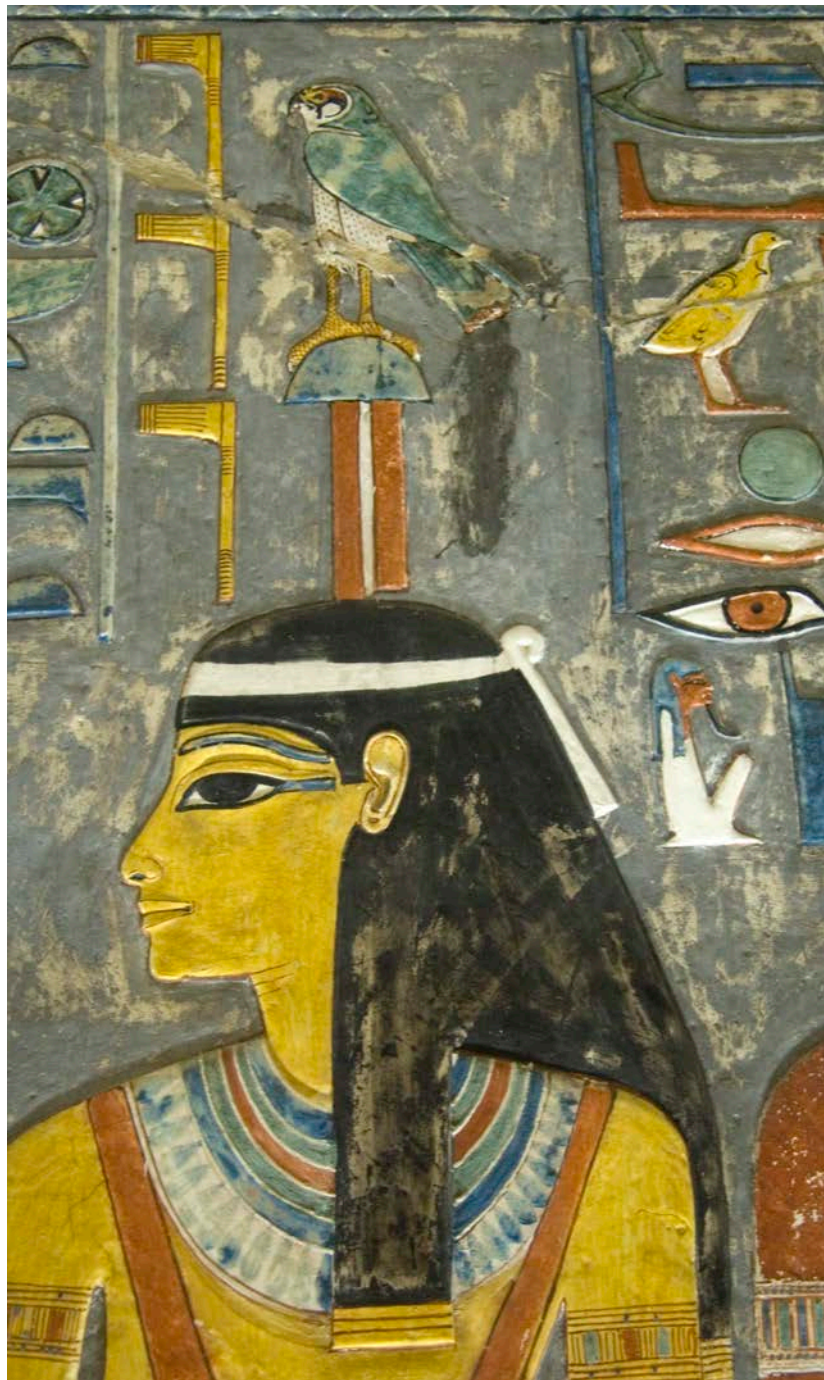
These winds, once believed to be the breath of a wrathful lioness deity desiccating the land, are known today by the Arabic word *khamsin*, derived from the word for “fifty”; these windstorms are believed to rage for fifty days each year.

In their most intense form, contemporary sandstorms are disruptive and potentially dangerous—closing airports, darkening the daylight hours of cities, and turning the sun an eerie unnatural hue. It is imperative to pause and remember that the periodically catastrophic sandstorms of modern Egypt once filled the ancient world with terror, making life seem unimaginably unpredictable and dangerous. Today, these winds are intrusive, but in ancient Egypt, they were potentially life-changing.

The primal force of the untamed desert winds was mirrored in the very breath of the lioness goddess Sekhmet. Although her ferocity as a protector of the pharaoh was legendary, Sekhmet could also be portrayed as a guardian of the sun god. In depictions of Ra’s voyage through the underworld, Sekhmet was sometimes portrayed standing in the prow of the sun god’s barque defending him against the depredations of the serpent Apep.

VIRTUOUS OF COUNTENANCE

The nightly voyage of the sun god through the underworld required safe passage through portals, gates, or pylons before arriving in the afterlife, known as the Kingdom of Osiris. Traditionally, in the Valley of the Kings, tombs portrayed twelve gates, symbolic of the twelve hours of the night. Each gate was guarded by remarkable creatures, often part human and part animal, and endowed with unique protective powers. Ra and the deceased king or queen, fused



In the Tomb of King Horemheb (KV 57), Hathor is portrayed in her role as Mistress of the West, welcoming the dead into the underworld. She appears as a lithe woman in a form-fitting patterned dress. On her head is a blue-gray falcon perched on a pole—symbol for the land of setting sun.

with the figure of the sun god, navigated the challenges of the perilous passage through these portals before arriving safely in the afterlife.

The guardian deity protecting each portal permitted passage only to those who knew his or her secret name.

In the Temple of Hathor at Dendera, rays of sunlight illuminate the figure of Osiris lying on a leonine bier incised in the walls of a light well in a small chapel.

Describing this scene, Egyptologist Holger Kockelmann tells us that “the solar disc above the god is not depicted, but substituted by the real sunlight that shines through the opening in the ceiling. The accompanying texts refer to Osiris’ unification with the sun.”

It is this Ra-Osiris merger that fuels the rebirth of the sun at dawn.



A wall fragment of a pair of Ruty lions, guardians of the rising and setting sun, in the Tomb of Nefertari, Valley of the Queens. Between them sits the hieroglyph for the word “horizon”.

The twin lions also represent the notions of “yesterday” and “tomorrow”, which symbolise the gods Osiris and Ra, respectively. As god of the dead, Osiris embodied the past, while the sun god Ra represented tomorrow and the promise of eternal life. As the sun burst forth each morning from the eastern horizon, so too did the blessed deceased.



promise of the resurrection of the body in another realm.

The regal nature and indisputable power of the lion are symbolized by the noble head, elegant curved tail, and powerful legs that transform the bier into the body of a great animal, whose place in the kingdom of animals affirms the supremacy of the pharaoh.

RUTY

A remarkable fragment of a pair of male leonine deities graces one of the many magnificent chambers of the tomb of Queen Nefertari. Ruty means “the pair of lions.” The lion and his double, guardians of the horizon, were once rendered back to back, although one of the magnificent lions no longer exists. Faced with the void created by the missing image, visitors to the ancient sepulcher long to rewind time, resurrect the image, and witness the pristine original. Ruty’s

missing twin is a poignant reminder of the vicissitudes of time and the vagaries of fate.

The remaining lion god’s great mane is evoked by an imaginative pattern, a skein of fine lines ornamented with circles. The deft abbreviated brushwork of this image startles our modern sensibility, which tends to associate the graphic clarity and brevity of stylized description with the language of contemporary art. Incisive strokes describe the whiskers, snout, and curved jowls of the lion. Each brushstroke appears to be premeditated, reverently considered, and then executed without hesitation. The remarkable rendition bristles with aliveness. Against the backdrop of the hand-chiseled cave wall, the remaining plaster surface bearing the eloquent fragment of the deity Ruty appears to emerge out of the past into the present.

The Ruty lions were usually portrayed facing in opposite directions with the hieroglyph for the horizon on



In this scene from a column in the Burial Chamber of Queen Nefertari (QV 66), Horus merges with the form of a sem-priest who will preside over the rites that will defy death and preserve the queen's body for eternity. He is portrayed wearing a white kilt and a leopard skin.

In a fitting duality, the deity who wears the pelt of a creature capable of inflicting death will ensure that the

queen will live forever. The head of the animal rests on his bare chest, while the claws of leopard brush against his bare leg and encircle his arms. In his left hand, he grasps the leopard's paw—its curved claws penetrate the hieroglyphic text uniting the image and the glyphs while his extended right hand asks Osiris to intercede in the queen's favour.



In the 1880s, British archaeologist William Matthew Flinders Petrie (1853–1942) employed a team of hundreds of Egyptian workers to excavate the site of Hawara, near the entrance to Egypt’s Faiyum oasis. Although he was initially attracted by the 12th Dynasty pyramid of King Amenemhat III (ca. 1831–1786 B.C.), and the lure of the legendary “Labyrinth” that once formed its associated temple complex, Petrie stayed at the site because of the vast quantity of material from the Graeco-Roman Period. Despite Petrie’s eventual enthusiasm for (some of) its remains, this period of Egypt’s history is both its most object-rich, and, ironically, also one of its most overlooked.

Due to financial sponsorship from Manchester cotton magnate—and active non-conformist Christian—Jesse Haworth (1835–1920), Petrie was able to realise his ambition of digging at the site of the “Labyrinth”. Expecting to find Middle Kingdom tombs, Petrie was so overwhelmed with the quantity of Graeco-Roman finds that it was

impossible—and perhaps undesirable—to make an accurate record of the majority of objects, especially burials. He favoured mummies with striking painted panel portraits attached—a stylistic import from Italy—which he prized as direct evidence of the Greek or Roman identity of people living and dying in the Faiyum.

Petrie was less complimentary about mummies with gilded, moulded plaster masks, complaining in his diary that “the plague of gilt mummies continues”, “wretched things with gilt faces and painted head pieces”.

Mummies of Graeco-Roman date with any form of decoration made up only around two percent of those

Petrie’s workers’ excavated; the majority of which were undecorated—“plain”—specimens, and Petrie was ruthlessly efficient in working through these. He wrote that “as for poor mummies without painting or cases, we heave them over by the dozen every day.”

How different were his attitudes to the people who made and buried the mummies.

MUMMY PORTRAIT
ROMAN EGYPT
FAIYUM OASIS
MANCHESTER MUSEUM. ACC. NO. 1767
PHOTO: MICHAEL POLLARD

This painted portrait is set into a plaster mask which covers the upper body of a Roman-era mummy; it depicts a man with dark curly hair, a full beard, and a light mustache. The appearance and hairstyle of the portrait suggests a date sometime around the reign of Hadrian, ca. A.D. 117–138.



divinised *sah* form than gods being depicted in the shape of mummies. Coffin terminology is also misleading: “anthropoid” is often used to describe the shrouded *sah* form—intended to be more divine than human in shape.

READING REPRESENTATIONS

Petrie was highly critical of the “crude” style of Graeco-Roman funerary decoration, dismissing garbled inscriptions as due to foreign influence and lack of

knowledge; such pejorative assessments persist today. According to Petrie, “hieroglyphs were by then forgotten, inscribed parts being all fudge or blanks.” In fact, hieroglyphic script clearly held a fascination for the Romans, and this helped sustain the script in certain contexts where otherwise it might have become obsolete much sooner.

Irrespective of the quality of the hieroglyphs, the value of the iconographic themes pertaining to a broad range of mummy covers and coffins can be illustrated through

CARTONNAGE (LINEN AND PLASTER) MUMMY MASK
PTOLEMAIC PERIOD
HAWARA, FAIYUM OASIS
MANCHESTER MUSEUM. ACC. NO. 2178a
PHOTO: JULIA THORNE

This mask features a blue wig, reminiscent of the lapis lazuli hair of the gods, and a wreath of lotus buds and blossoms around the head, symbolising the promise of new life.



“May he (Re) illuminate your face in the underworld,



You breathe by gold,



and you go forth by gold.”

(Papyrus Boulaq III, containing the *Embalming Ritual*.)

A GILDED LADY FROM HAWARA

The same basic iconographic components found on the coffin of Tasheriankh from Akhmim were applied directly to the outer shroud of a 1st century A.D. female mummy from Petrie’s 1911 excavations at Hawara (opposite page). The lady is—rather unusually—identified by name in Greek letters at the top of her cartonnage mask, most likely read as “Isaious (or Isarous) daughter of Demetrios”.

The upper part of the mummy is covered by an elaborate mask modelled in gilded cartonnage, showing the deceased holding a wreath, with elaborate coiffure of lightly waved hair and tight corkscrew curls, and full face reminiscent of some Ptolemaic ideals. The rich jewellery comprises necklaces set with semi-precious stones and snake bracelets of the sort that harnessed the serpent’s protective power from Pharaonic contexts. The resulting impression is of the idealised appearance of a Roman lady of high status. The same iconography is shared by another gilded mummy of a small girl from Hawara (right), showing the expectation of a full adult existence in the afterlife for those who had died as children.

Isaious is also provided with a rich panoply of traditional Pharaonic iconography. On the back and underside of the cartonnage mask or on lower sections (presently obscured by wrappings), are traditional Egyptian motifs. On the outer, mainly red-pigmented shroud, hangs a broad (*wesekh*) collar. Under this, Nut kneels on the hieroglyphic symbol for gold and extends her wings flanked by scenes of the gods Anubis and Thoth. Beneath, the jackal-headed Anubis appears again tending the mummy of the deceased on a bier—equipped with canopic jars that no one would have used in the Roman Period. Finally, a rather faded libation scene appears; in this and in the scenes that flank the sides of the body,



WRAPPED MUMMY OF A YOUNG GIRL
ROMAN EGYPT
HAWARA, FAIYUM OASIS
MANCHESTER MUSEUM. ACC. NO. 1769
PHOTO: JULIA THORNE

The front of this young girl’s mask is gilded and shows the deceased with a type of Roman hairstyle which can be dated to the mid-1st century A.D.

This girl was reborn in the afterlife looking her very best: her mask depicts the fashion of the day, and includes jewellery inlaid with glass, and snake-shaped bracelets. A cartonnage footcase fits over the wrapped feet of her mummy, the toes of which are shown peeking out—probably to show off her fine sandals.



“(Quote) I have arrived at
Piramesses, Life, Prosperity, Health...”



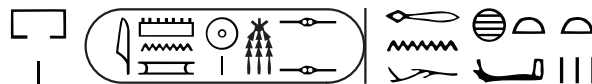
It is a perfect estate, without equal.”

(Papyrus Anastasi III [British Museum, EA 10246],
dated to the rule of King Merenptah, ca. 1210 B.C.)



A reconstruction proposal of the Piramesses royal stables, discovered in 1999 by a joint Egyptian-German team. The Guinness Book of Records holds that these are the oldest horse stables in the world. The stable complex was enormous, housing 460 horses at a time.

PIRAMESSES



“The House of Ramesses, Great of Victories”

In this fourth chapter of a five-part series on royal residences in the Nile Delta, Egyptologist **Dr. Nicky Nielsen** explores the history and development of the city of Piramesses, the Ramesside capital.



© NICKY NIELSEN

The most significant surface trace of the great city of Piramesses are these feet from a colossal seated statue of Ramesses II. The statue base was discovered in 1955 by Egyptian archaeologist Shehata Adam at Tell Abu el-Shafei,

an area just north of Qantir. Adam estimated that the full statue would have been 10 metres tall. It was probably one of a pair of statues that fronted a temple pylon. Only a few other scattered remains have been found (see page 32).

TO TRAVEL FROM CAIRO TO THE SMALL Delta village of Qantir, one takes the Ismallia Desert Road, a highway that—as the name suggests—leads east out of Cairo through 10th of Ramadan City and the fringes of the Eastern Desert before making a beeline to the north. Crossing from the desert to the Delta is an overwhelming sensory experience—from the relative monotony and quiet of the desert to the cacophony of sights, sounds and smells of the many small villages and larger towns which intersperse the fertile fields that once made Egypt the breadbasket of the world.

To enter Qantir, you have to cross a nondescript concrete bridge, and on the face of it, there is little to suggest that under your feet lie the street, palaces, houses and workshops of one of the largest and most magnificent capitals of its time: Piramesses. If you leave the roads of the village and head out into the fields, navigating narrow paths, jumping back and forth across irrigation channels, an observant visitor will begin to spot the signs of major archaeology: sherds litter the ground, as do carved fragments of weathered stone, and even the occasional glint of faience.

Perhaps the most obvious indicator of a major settlement is the pair of limestone feet which stand lonely sentinel in the middle of a field (above), the only remnant of

what certainly were several named colossal statues worshipped at the site during its heyday, some 3,200 years ago. Today, it's difficult to stand in front of the stone feet without remembering Shelley's famous poem Ozymandias:

"I met a traveller from an antique land,
Who said: 'Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert....
And on the pedestal, these words appear:
My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings;
Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!'"

These trunkless legs of stone do not stand in the desert, but rather half-buried in dark Delta soil (above), and no visage like the one that inspired Shelley lies nearby. But the feet do belong to the same ruler whose famous visage inspired the poet: Ramesses II.

CHRONOLOGY AND LAYOUT

Unlike Amarna or Deir el-Medina, there are few above-ground structures at Qantir to suggest the presence of what was once considered the greatest city in Egypt. Instead, excavators have to dig into the wet soil of the Delta,



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If you want to find Piramesses, visit Tanis. When the branch of the Nile on which Piramesses was located began to silt up during the 20th Dynasty, the entire city was dismantled by the kings of the 21st Dynasty for their new capital at Tanis. Here you can see the stack of reused granite obelisks in the Gate of Shoshenq III at Tanis.

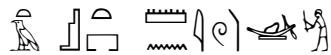
across in texts where Piramesses is described as:



“The marshalling place of your chariotry,



the mustering place of your army,



the mooring place of your ships’ troops.”

(Papyrus Anastasi III [British Museum, EA 10246], dated to the third regnal year of King Merenptah, ca. 1210 B.C.)

Aside from the production of weapons of war, excavations have also uncovered industrial-scale production of glass—both finished products such as beads and other jewellery, and also raw coloured glass of the kind traded widely around the Eastern Mediterranean during the Late Bronze Age, some ending up as far afield as Scandinavia.

The excavations at Piramesses over the last 30 years give an impression of a vibrant and busy capital, one heavily dominated by the presence of military personnel and with

a highly developed industrial production geared towards supporting the expansionist tendencies of the early Rameside rulers. At the same time, for many foreign traders, Piramesses was their first major port of call, and the city was a major trading hub:



“The chiefs of every foreign country come here (Piramesses)



to drop off their products.”

(Ostrakon O. Ashmolean HO 1187 1942.64, 19th Dynasty, ca. 1200 B.C.)

THE HINTERLAND

Piramesses did not, of course, exist by itself in splendid isolation; it was part of a network of settlements in the eastern Nile Delta, many connected by the Pelusiac branch of the Nile, which afforded access from Thebes and Memphis all the way to the Mediterranean Sea.

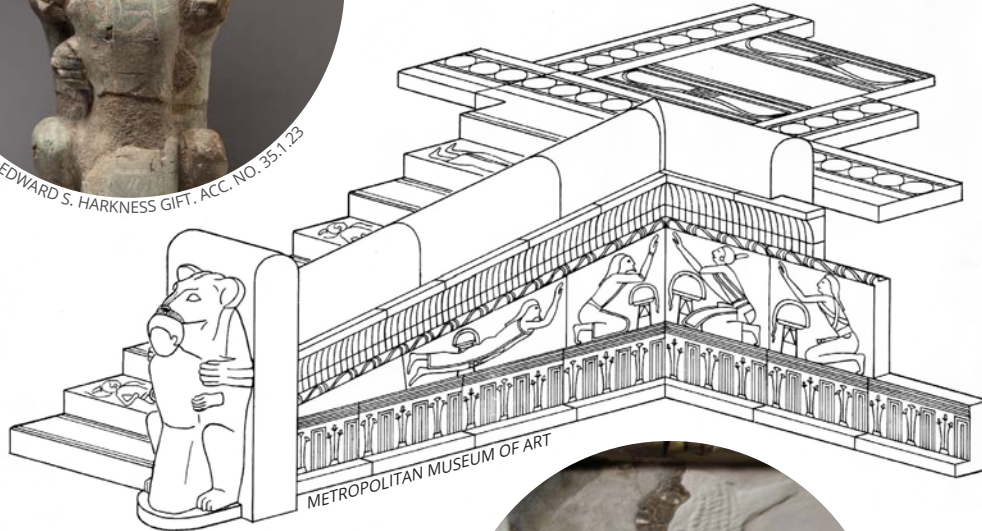
Among such settlements was Imet, known today as Tell Nabasha, lying some 12 km north of Qantir-Piramesses. Today, little is left of this settlement aside from some scattered remnants, but during the Rameside Period, the city hosted a major temple dedicated to Wadjet, Mistress of Imet—the cobra goddess intensely linked to the notion of power and kingship in ancient Egypt.

We know from private funerary monuments from the



METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, ROGERS FUND, EDWARD S. HARKNESS GIFT, ACC. NO. 35.1.23

This sculpture of a lion sitting on its haunches, with the head of a foreigner in his mouth, once decorated the base of the stairway leading up to Ramesses II's throne dais in his royal palace at Piramesses, reconstructed below. The remaining hieroglyphs tell us that the lion (representing pharaonic might) is subduing a prince of Kush. No doubt the king wished to send a strong message/warning to visiting foreign emissaries.



METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

This faience tile, featuring a kneeling Nubian before an offering table, came from the front of the king's throne dais at Piramesses. Through the city's strategic location and royal favour, Piramesses became one of the greatest cities of ancient Egypt. It was also home to a number of Ramesside kings, who renovated the palace through their reigns. New tiles were made, and the old tiles—like this one—were



METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, ROGERS FUND, EDWARD S. HARKNESS GIFT, ACC. NO. 35.1.16

discarded. Based on these tiles, archaeologists have been able to reconstruct decorated palace features that would otherwise have been lost forever.

site that Imet played host to several important members of the elite, including a charioteer and royal scribe by the name of Merenptah, who lived during the reign of Ramesses II, as well as a Deputy of the House of Amun named Nakhtamun. Perhaps this Nakhtamun served in the Temple of Amun at Piramesses mentioned in Papyrus Anastasi II on page 32.

THE END OF PIRAMESSSES

Despite the praise that Piramesses' duration was "like that of Memphis," the Nile had other plans. Towards the end of the Ramesside Period, the Pelusiac branch of the Nile silted up, making it more difficult to bring materials, people and trade goods to the settlement, and jeopardising the city's supply of fresh water. Piramesses was effectively cut off from the area's main thoroughfare. The glories of Piramesses became the building blocks of a new royal residence and temple complex at Tanis, to the north.

Perhaps the most puzzling aspect of the archaeological site of Qantir is the almost total lack of burials. It seems strangely incongruent that a city which must have ranked among the largest in the world during its heyday did not seem to have a large dedicated necropolis, like Memphis

had Saqqara and Thebes had the valleys of the West bank. So where then, were the presumably large cohort of high-ranking officials and military officers working in Piramesses buried? One possibility is that their bodies were returned to other cemeteries in Egypt closer to their ancestral homes. Burials of officials who worked at Piramesses have been found at Saqqara, at Sedmet and even in Thebes. Another possibility is that some were buried further away from Piramesses, such as in the extensive necropolis of Imet/Tell Nabasha located north of the city.



DR. NICKY NIELSEN is a Lecturer in Egyptology at the University of Manchester and field director of the Tell Nabasha Survey Project.

PIRAMESSSES TODAY

There is little to draw the casual visitor to the site of Qantir/Piramesses today. Some of the material found in the eastern Nile Delta can be viewed in the newly-opened Zagazig Museum, northeast of the ancient centre of Bubastis, and visitors can, of course, wander among the ruins of Piramesses—located ironically at Tanis, far from their original location.

Nigel Fletcher-Jones
Ancient Egyptian
Jewelry



Pendant Head of Hathor

Osorkon II (ca. 874–850 b.c.) established his heir, Sheshonq, as High Priest of Ptah at Memphis. Prince Sheshonq predeceased his father, however, and was buried there. This exquisite piece—5.5 cm (2.17") high—is carved from a single piece of lapis lazuli, with gold inlay, and glass paste eyes.

ORIGINAL LOCATION : TOMB OF HIGH PRIEST SHESHONQ, MEMPHIS

DISCOVERED BY : AHMED BADAWY, 1942

MATERIALS : LAPIS LAZULI, GOLD, GLASS PASTE

DYNASTY : 22ND, ca. 945–715 b.c., THIRD INTERMEDIATE PERIOD

REIGN : OSORKON II (ca. 874–850 b.c.)

EGYPTIAN MUSEUM ENTRY : JE 86780, GEM 2360

PHOTO : ARCHIVO WHITE STAR, ARALDO DE LUCA

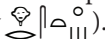


Necklace of Fly Pendants

Each fly's wings are of sheet gold, upon which a second molded sheet has been soldered. Slots were cut in this to represent the fly's body. These are said to flash as the wearer moves, capturing the iridescence of the living insect.

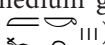
FIND SPOT : TOMB OF QUEEN AHHOTEP, LUXOR
DISCOVERED BY : AUGUSTE MARIETTE, 1859
MATERIALS : GOLD, SILVER, BRONZE
DYNASTY : 18TH, NEW KINGDOM
REIGNS : TAA (ca. 1560 B.C.),
 KAMOSE (ca. 1555–1550 B.C.), AND
 AHMOSE (ca. 1550–1525 B.C.)
MUSEUM ENTRY : JE 4694, CG 52671, Luxor J. 854
PHOTO : ARCHIVO WHITE STAR, ARALDO DE LUCA

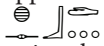
certainly by the New Kingdom, we are aware from temple inscriptions that enormous quantities of silver were being imported into Egypt.

Around forty different types of gemstone were used in the surviving pieces of ancient Egyptian jewelry—many appearing only with the arrival of the Greeks and Romans when they were imported from elsewhere. Of these semi-precious stones, the most popular was orange-red or red carnelian (*heraset* )

While, over time, popular stones might be imitated, often by the use of glass paste or clear rock crystal over paint, the ancient Egyptians continued to prefer to use genuine carnelian in very large quantities. The volumes were so large, in fact, that it is unlikely that the known sources of the stone (including at Stella Ridge, about fifty miles northwest of the rock-cut temples at Abu Simbel) could have met demand over the centuries. Additional supplies of carnelian may have come from the Nile terraces in Nubia near Wadi Halfa (in modern Sudan), but it has been suggested that some may have come from the far distant deposits in modern India's Gujarat state

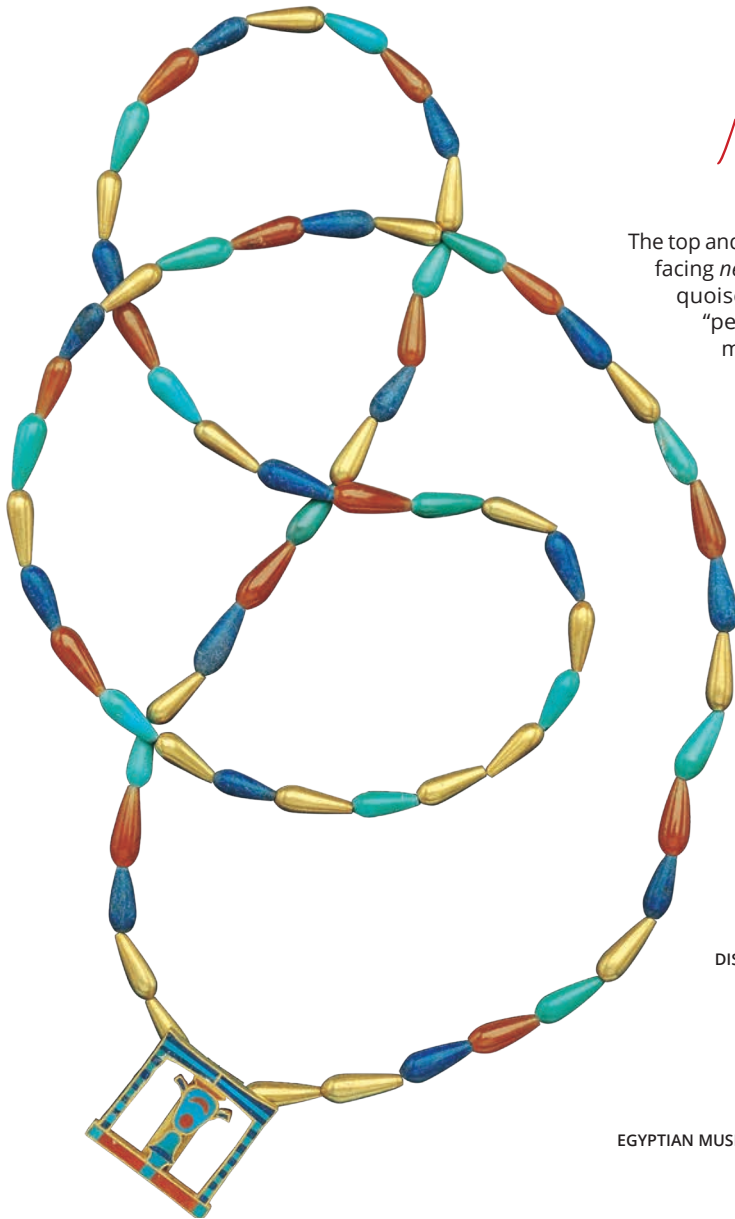
where the stone had been mined since about 3000 B.C.

Light green, medium green, and greenish-blue turquoise (*mefkat* ) , by contrast, came from mines in the southwest of the Sinai Peninsula—Wadi Magram from the Early Dynastic Period to the Middle Kingdom, and Serabit el-Khadim from (at the latest) the Middle Kingdom to the Late Period, though the principal activity here may have been mining for copper.

Although dark blue lapis lazuli (*khesbed* ) is intimately connected with ancient Egyptian jewelry, it is doubtful if any of the stone was mined within Egypt. The primary ancient source was the region of Badakhshan in northeast Afghanistan, which lay at the beginning of a great trade network across western Asia—the stone most likely coming to Egypt through the port of Byblos, now in modern Lebanon.

The colors associated with many of these stones had symbolic or magical significance that accounts in part for their enduring popularity in jewelry. The red and red-orange color of carnelian was naturally associated with vitality and the sun; the light blue of some forms of

Queen Weret's Motto Necklace





The top and sides of the delicate clasp consists of inward-facing *netjer* god signs inlaid with lapis lazuli and turquoise. The bottom is a *hetep* offering table of “peace”. Above this is an *ib* “heart” sign with minute insertions of carnelian.

The motto reflects a version of the story of Horus and Seth in which they, and their lands, are reconciled.

FIND SPOT : PYRAMID IX, FUNERARY COMPLEX OF SENWOSRET III, DAHSHUR
DISCOVERED BY : METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 1994–95
MATERIALS : GOLD, TURQUOISE, LAPIS LAZULI, CARNELIAN
DYNASTY : 12TH, ca. 1985–1795 B.C., MIDDLE KINGDOM
REIGNS : AMENEMHAT II (ca. 1922–1878 B.C.), SENWOSRET III (ca. 1874–1855 B.C.)
EGYPTIAN MUSEUM ENTRIES : JE 98783, JE 98790c, JE 98971c, JE 98792c, JE 98793c
PHOTO : ARCHIVO WHITE STAR, ARALDO DE LUCA

turquoise reflected the daytime sky and the waters from which all things were thought to have emerged at creation; the green and blue-green of turquoise recalled new growth along the banks of the Nile after the annual flood, and a comparable promise of resurrection in the afterlife; and the dark blue of lapis lazuli may have represented the protective night sky.

Indeed, the color of a stone (or its imitation in manufactured Egyptian faience or glass) seems to have been more important from a magical perspective than the value or rarity of the genuine stone. The horizontal bands of the *nemes* headcloth of the funerary mask of Tutankhamun, for example, are made simply of glass paste in imitation of lapis lazuli, not the stone itself.

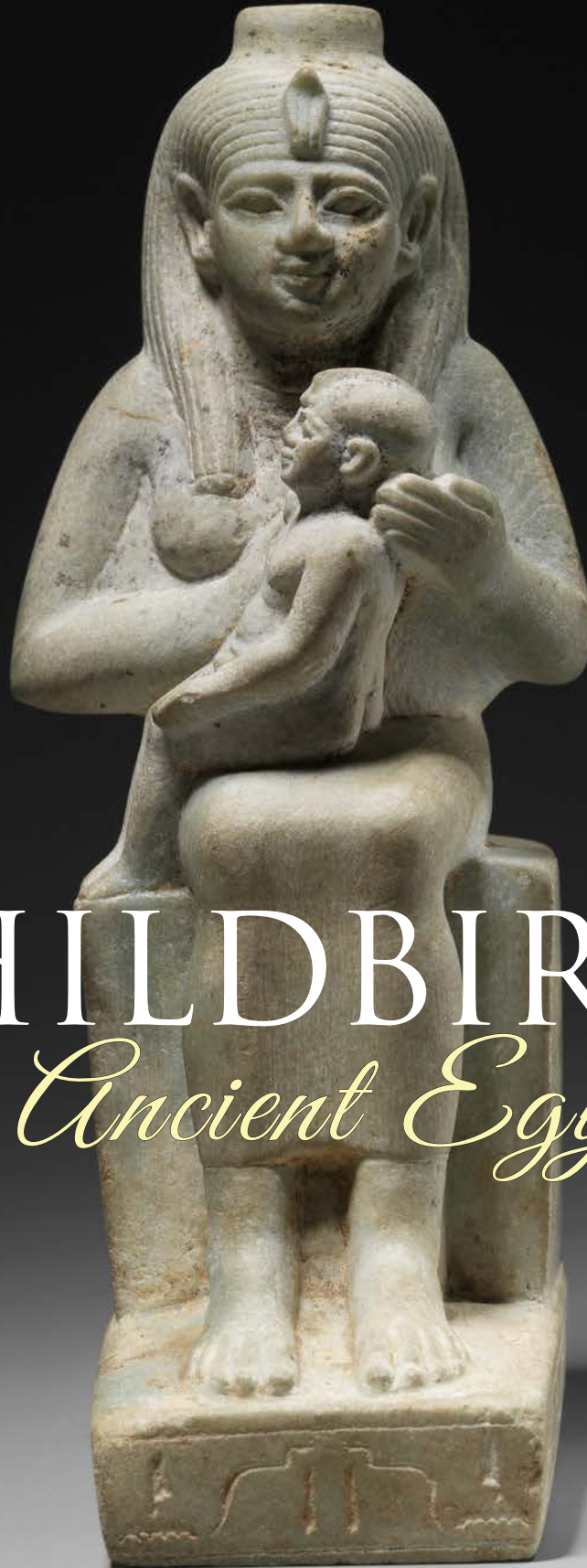
The popularity of other gemstones came and went over time: amethyst (*hesmen* ) was commonly mined and used in Middle Kingdom and Greco-Roman Egypt; and red garnet (*hemaget* ) was used rarely in the pharaonic periods, but commonly in the

Greco-Roman period. Indeed, many stones were used occasionally in ancient Egyptian history, but more commonly in the Ptolemaic and Roman periods, including common agate, onyx, sardonyx, aquamarine, sapphire, and emerald (the emeralds mined in Egypt, the sapphires imported from the east—particularly from India).

From the isolated mines in the desert, the raw gemstones would be carried to workshops where, most often, they were converted into beads, not least because—until almost the end of ancient Egyptian history—the jewelers possessed nothing harder than chert, flint, quartzite, sandstone, or sand itself with which to work the stones.

The gems would be firstly chipped and laboriously ground into rough shape, and newly-fashioned beads would be drilled through by a hand- or bow-drill with a hard stone bit. Carving and engraving of other objects no doubt involved broadly similar techniques. Polishing was probably accomplished using a hard, flat rock surface and very fine sand, or fine sand paste

VANESSA FOOTT



CHILD BIRTH



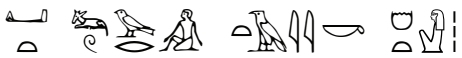

in Ancient Egypt

The inscription around the base of this Late Period (ca. 747–332 B.C.) statuette of Isis suckling her son, Horus, asks the goddess to “give life and health to Ankhor, born of Heretib”. As the wife of the murdered Osiris, Isis protected and raised their son, Horus, and became the archetypal symbol of motherhood and magical care.






METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART. ROGERS FUND, 1945. ACC. NO. 45.2.10

The dangerous period did not pass just because a successful birth had been achieved. Surviving childhood was not easy, with the risk of disease, accidents and the danger from the presence of snakes and scorpions. Having children was central to the Egyptian way of life. Without the modern welfare state, children were relied on to look after parents in the case of illness or accident and were known as ‘staffs of old age’. Children were also vitally important to ensure that the mortuary cult of the parents was maintained once they were deceased.

An ostracon from Deir el-Medina, dating to the Rameside period, O. Berlin 10627, is a letter to the scribe Nekhemmut that ridicules him for not being able to father his own children:


 “You are not a man at all,


 indeed, you cannot make your wife pregnant,

 like your fellow men.”

The letter then goes on to chastise Nekhemmut for being well positioned in life, yet not helping others or providing for his own succession. After all, with the Egyptian life-expectancy being so low (around 30 years of age), there would have been no shortage of children needing homes:



 “Furthermore, (although) you are exceedingly
 strong and wealthy,

 you don’t give anything to anyone.


 As for him who has no
 children,



 he adopts an orphan instead and brings him up.”

(Ostracon O. Berlin 10627,
20th Dynasty: Ramesses III–IV, ca. 1155 B.C.)



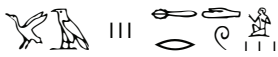
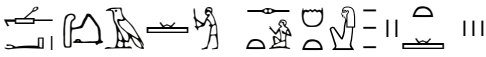
A papyrus in Oxford’s Ashmolean Museum, P. Ashmolean 1945.96 (the so-called Adoption Papyrus), is a Rameside-era legal document that tells us about a childless lady, Rannefer, who adopts three children born to one of her servants (possibly fathered by her husband), and raises them as her own:



METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART. ROGERS FUND, 1972. ACC. NO. 1972.48

This faience female dwarf figure dates to Egypt’s Middle Kingdom (12th–13th Dynasties, ca. 1800 B.C.), and holds a bow-legged stance, similar to the god Bes and his female counterpart, Beset. She wears a long bead necklace, armlets and an elaborate hairdo.

Dwarves and pygmies were highly respected in ancient Egypt, with their short stature perhaps recalling the god Bes and giving rise to the belief that they possessed beneficial magic powers. As detailed on the opposite page, an ancient magical spell prescribed that a dwarf figure should be placed on the forehead of a woman giving birth to facilitate the passing of the placenta.


 “We purchased the female slave Dinihutiri,


 and she gave birth
 to these three children,

 one male, two female, in total three.

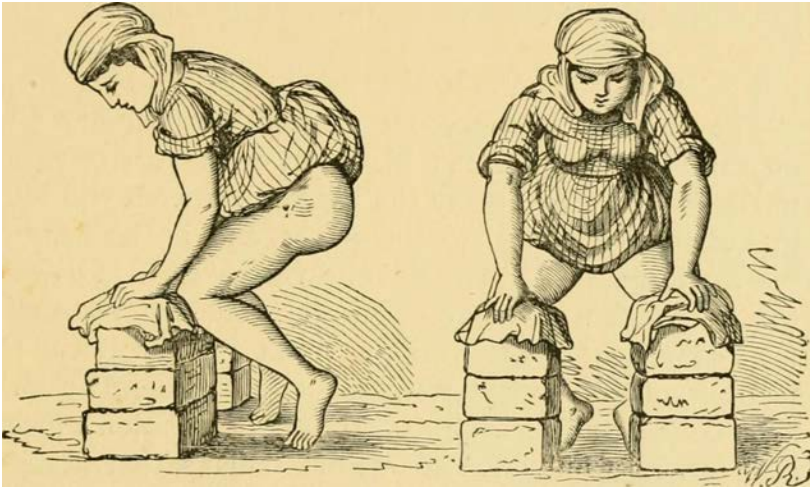
(Continued over page)



This flake of limestone, likely from Deir el-Medina at Luxor, is decorated with what is possibly a sketch for a painting of a birth arbor. This household decoration is thought to have been designed for the space created for childbirth.

Egyptologist Edna R. Russmann describes this piece as depicting "a young woman sitting in a vine-covered bower nursing an infant. Her hair tied atop her head, she appears

to be naked except for a cloak (or a sling to carry the child!), elaborate sandals, jewellery, and a belt.... The fragmentary servant figure below, whose earring and partly shaven hairstyle suggest that she is a Nubian.... Since she is surrounded by the same vine leaves, it is probable that she is also in the pavilion, presenting these objects to the young mother... tending to her newborn."



When Tutankhamun's *Burial Chamber* was opened in 1923, four wall niches were found to contain four magical bricks. These represented the four bricks that supported Egyptian women during childbirth, and ensured the king's rebirth into the netherworld.

The image on the left, showing the use of stacked birth bricks in 19th-century Persia, provides us with an approximation of how the birth bricks may have been used in ancient Egypt. (Image from George Engelmann's *Labor Among Primitive Peoples*, 1882.)

With this method, mothers delivered their babies while squatting or kneeling on a pair of bricks, which provided room for attendants to catch the baby.

In 2001, archaeologists with the University of Pennsylvania working at Abydos, discovered an actual birth brick, some 3,700 years old—the first ever uncovered (left).

The Penn Museum team, led by Dr. Josef Wegner, were excavating the remains of the *Mayor's House* in Wah-Sut: a village for the people maintaining the funerary cult of the Middle Kingdom pharaoh Senusret III.

The unfired brick, dated to the 13th Dynasty (ca. 1675 B.C.), is around 36 cm long, and decorated with colourful paintings on all preserved sides. The bottom of the brick captures the joyful moment following a safe delivery (a reconstruction is shown at left). Here we see the new mother, sitting on a throne and holding her new baby boy (as indicated by his reddish skin tone). She is assisted by two women and protected by images of the cow-headed goddess of fertility, Hathor.

The sides of the brick are decorated with images of the same kinds of defensive gods and demons that feature on birth wands—a piece of which was found nearby.

This unique brick may have been used by the wife of a mayor of Abydos, a 13th-Dynasty princess named Renseneb.



© PENN MUSEUM. PHOTOGRAPH BY ELIZABETH JEAN WALKER



© PENN MUSEUM. DRAWING BY DR. JENNIFER HOUSER WEGNER

kohl pot—items that are common in these scenes, and which may be gifts presented on the birth of a child.

Mirrors, however, are very symbolic; the Egyptian for “mirror” is *ankh* (𓆎), which is the same word that they used for “life”. The mirror could therefore represent femininity, creation, birth in this world and rebirth in the next, and be an emblem of the sun. The handles of mirrors were often created in the form of Hathor (goddess of fertility—see previous page), Bes or even young girls wearing girdles.

The woman is shown sitting on a stool with a cushion on top. Stools of this type, often seen in this sort of context, are sometimes referred to as a “birth stool”. Her feet are resting on a cushion to avoid contact with the ground, possibly to do with the purification aspect of the scene.

TO WRAP UP...

There are many items in museums that can be associated

with childbirth and these are just a few of my favourites. It is a shame that so many settlement sites did not survive and the majority of the evidence comes from the Middle Kingdom site of Kahun and the New Kingdom site of Deir el-Medina, but these items have helped us to build a picture of the possible actions around childbirth. It must be remembered, however, that these undoubtedly varied over time and according to the status of the women. I hope that the items featured here spark the reader's interest to find out more about this fascinating subject.



VANESSA FOOTT holds a Certificate in Egyptology from the University of Manchester and is in the final year of the same university's Diploma in Egyptology. She volunteers as a Local Ambassador for The Egypt Exploration Society, and gives talks on Egyptology to local societies.

Rebecca Batley

EGYPT IN ROME

The Eternal City following the Battle of Actium



On September 2, 31 B.C., the forces of Mark Anthony and the Egyptian queen Cleopatra fell to those of Octavian and Rome at the Battle of Actium, off the coast of Greece. Octavian was left as the undisputed ruler of the Mediterranean, and he declared that he had “added Egypt to the Imperium of the Roman people.”

Octavian was furious at his former ally's new loyalty (and romance with) Cleopatra, and successfully convinced his people that through Anthony,

Cleopatra sought to add the glories of Rome to her own territories.

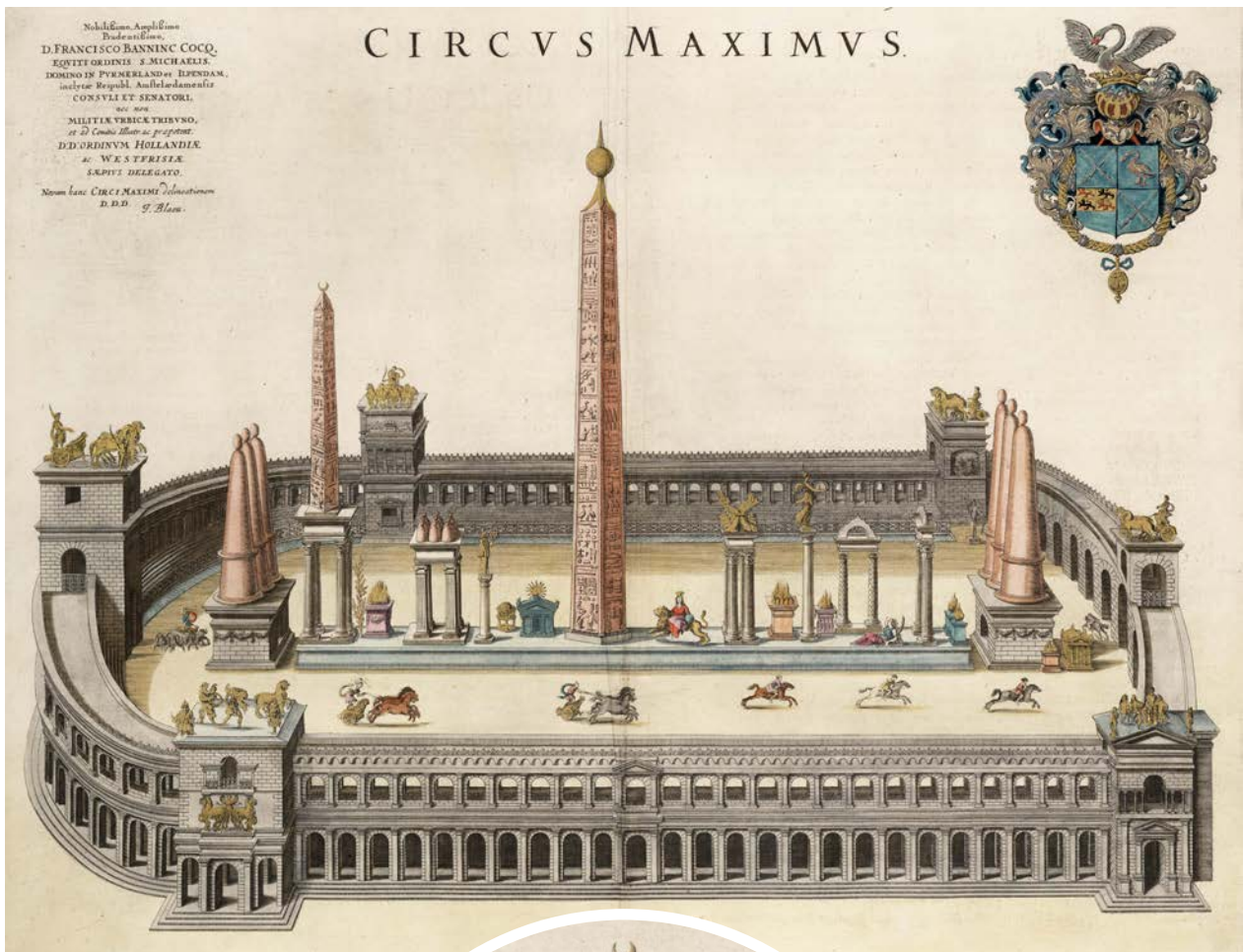
During the naval battle, Anthony and Cleopatra fled and escaped to Egypt. Within a year, they had taken their own lives.

Whatever an ordinary Roman's thoughts were regarding Egypt, one thing is certain: Octavian's amalgamation of Egypt's great wealth and resources following Actium would enable him to rule as Augustus—the first Roman emperor—and stabilise Rome financially for generations to come.

(ABOVE)

Following Rome's victory over Egypt, the cult of Isis spread rapidly throughout the Roman empire. This cameo with a bust of the goddess was made during the latter part of the preceding Ptolemaic Dynasty, ca. 200–31 B.C., when Egyptian motifs began blending with foreign styles. Isis is shown wearing a vulture headdress, a crown with horns flanking the solar disc, and a broad, striped pectoral. She also displays “Venus ring” fleshy creases on her neck—a sign of youth and vitality.

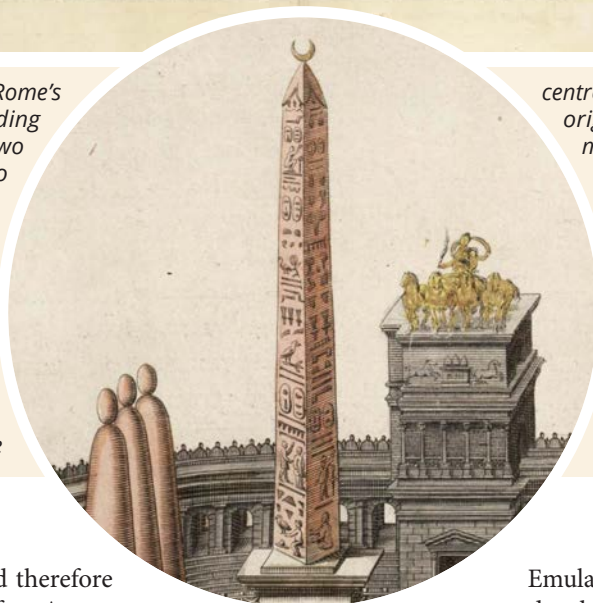
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A 17th-century re-imagining of Rome's Circus Maximus, with its dividing barrier (spina) decorated with two Egyptian obelisks, brought to Rome almost 400 years apart.

The Flaminio Obelisk (right), came from Heliopolis and was carved during Egypt's 19th-Dynasty reign of King Seti I (ca. 1285 B.C.). It was erected at the circus in 10 B.C. by Emperor Augustus, and now stands tall in Rome's Piazza del Popolo.

The larger obelisk in the



centre is known as the Lateran Obelisk, originally commissioned by Thutmose III (18th Dynasty, ca. 1430 B.C.) and erected at Karnak Temple. It made the trip to Rome in A.D. 357 at the behest of Constantius II. Rome's oldest monument now dominates the Piazza San Giovanni in Laterano, Rome.

This hand-coloured engraving was published by Dutch cartographer Johannes (Joan) Blaeu in 1649.

by “unRoman” femininity, and therefore deserving of having shared her fate. Augustus couldn't risk a resurgence of Antonian political sentiment, and art was one of the ways in which he re-enforced his superiority.

This failure of “women”, as embodied by Cleopatra, was further brought home by the Temple of Apollo's external frieze, which depicted the 50 daughters of Danaus, who, according to legend, fled Egypt to escape unwanted marriages. When their marriage became unavoidable they were ordered to kill their husbands, an act for which they were eternally condemned. Cleopatra and Danaus were said to have common Greek ancestry, and here their common fate is emphasised: “female fury” meant death—it had to be restrained and controlled, and Augustus was the man to do it, both in battle and here in the heart of Rome.

Emulating imperial examples, Egyptian art and culture quickly began to pervade Rome. To feed Augustus' propaganda machine, monuments such as obelisks (above) and sphinxes were brought to Rome at great expense. In 10 B.C., Augustus placed two huge obelisks in the Circus Maximus and the Campus Martius. The meaning could not have been clearer: Egypt's wealth and her culture now belonged to Rome.

Rome at this time also saw a surge in the popularity of Egyptian religious cults. By far the most significant of these was that of the popular Egyptian goddess Isis.

Rome had seen a moral and religious decline during the latter years of the Republic as its citizens had sought to escape political strife and conflict by exploring new exotic beliefs. Traditionally, the Vestal Virgins, who guarded Rome's sacred flame, had represented the power and stabil-



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PHOTO: ALEXANDR MEDVEDKOV/SHUTTERSTOCK

The Pyramid of Cestius was built during the reign of Augustus as the tomb for a Roman magistrate named Gaius Cestius. At the time of its construction, the pyramid would have stood in open countryside as tombs were forbidden within the city walls. At 37 metres tall, it would have dominated the skyline and have been an imposing sight—as it still is.

This wasn't the only pyramid tomb built in Rome; another of unknown origin was built near the present site of the Vatican. In the Middle Ages, this pyramid was known as the Pyramid of Romulus, while the Cestius Pyramid

became the Pyramid of Remus. It was believed that the two marble monuments were the tombs of the legendary founders of Rome.

The Pyramid of Romulus stood until the 16th century, when it became a handy source of pre-cut marble, and was dismantled during the construction of St. Peter's Basilica. The Cestius Pyramid, however, had been incorporated into the construction of the Aurelian Walls in the 3rd century to form a triangular bastion. While the pyramid is clad in attractive white marble, its reuse in the wall helped it survive the centuries.

asserted again his power over the defeated Egypt. In a way, by legalising her worship, Augustus was “taming” her and bringing her influence under his control.

In the same way that Cleopatra was the living Isis, the popularity of Egyptian beliefs and culture—whose rulers had always had divine association—led to the growth of the Roman Imperial Cult, under which the leader of Rome began to be viewed and portrayed as a “divine” religious leader. Traditionally, Roman rulers had no divine status, but now the veneration of Augustus began to spread throughout the Empire, and he was worshipped at temples such as that of Dea Romana in Pergamon (northwest Turkey), and was considered to be a son of both the deified Caesar and Apollo. The successful integration of Egyptian cults into Rome following the Battle of Actium had allowed Augustus to become a religious leader himself.

Another way in which Augustus continued to assert

control over Egypt, while still allowing for its presence, can be seen in the coinage he issued soon after his success at Actium. The coin shown opposite features on one side the victors of the Battle of Actium, Augustus and his friend, general and son-in-law, Agrippa. On the other side is a chained crocodile. The crocodile was both a symbol of Egypt and a popular Roman image of the “exotic”, and its bondage reinforced Egypt’s submission to Rome’s might.

This fascination with Egypt was not just confined to Augustus and the upper echelons of society, Egyptian fashions became increasingly popular as women sought to emulate the defeated Egyptian queen. Lotus symbols, solar discs and crowns all became widespread—not just within the political sphere but also in the domestic.

This is seen particularly in statues and mausoleums. Famously, the Roman magistrate and religious elder Gaius Cestius built his family tomb in the style of an Egyptian

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