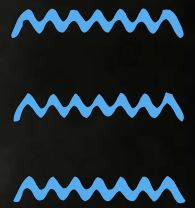
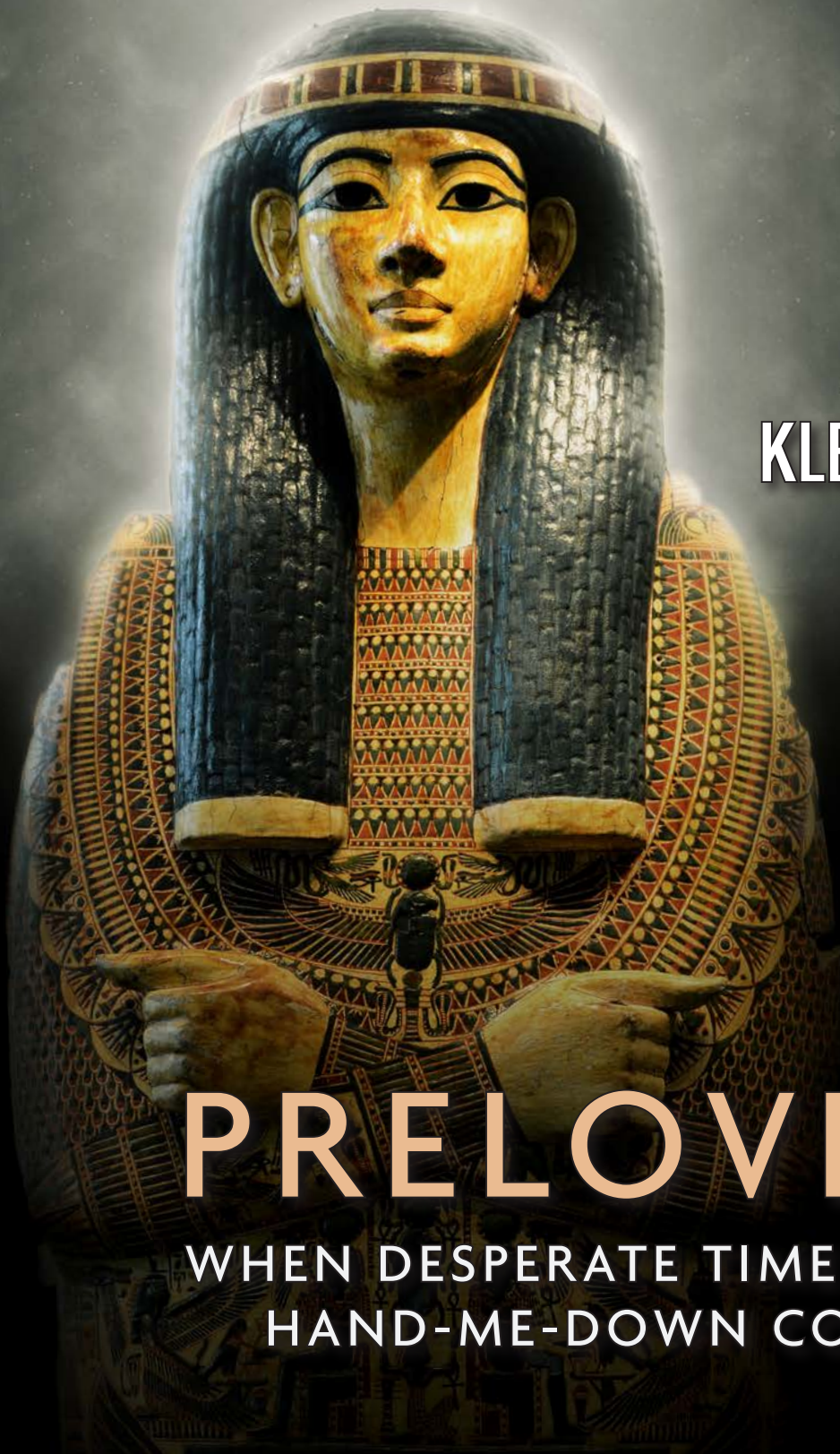


# NILE



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
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# NILE



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*A 2016 handout photo of two young visitors to the National Museum of Brazil admiring the coffin of Harsiese  ("Horus, son of Isis"). Inside is an image of the goddess Nut with open and extended arms—ready, it seems, to embrace the mummy that the coffin once held. Harsiese was a priest at Karnak Temple during the 26th Dynasty (ca. 664–525 B.C.).*

*The coffin was brought to Brazil in 1826 by Nicolau Fiengo, an Italian merchant who had purchased a collection of antiquities in Marseille (France), likely to have been excavated by Giovanni Belzoni. It was purchased and donated to the museum by Dom Pedro I, Brazil's first Emperor. The current fate of Harsiese's coffin is not known.*

**O**n the night of September 2, a major fire devastated the National Museum of Brazil in Rio de Janeiro, gutting the centuries-old museum building. Firefighters and desperate employees dashed into the burning building to try and save whatever they could carry out. Unfortunately, Latin America's largest Egyptology collection, with over 700 irreplaceable items, was most likely completely lost.

While debate continues over dwindling museum funding needed to protect collections like this around the

world, one of the most pressing needs now is to create a digital record of the lost collection. To assist the museum, the Committee for Egyptian Collections of the International Council of Museums (CIPEG) has requested that past visitors contribute their photos to an online repository via this email address: [egyptinrio@gmail.com](mailto:egyptinrio@gmail.com).

While the opportunity to experience the collection in person has been lost forever, the aim is to make the virtual record available for all, and ensure that this part of ancient Egypt's heritage doesn't disappear altogether.





6

# KLEOPATRA SELENE

**Rebecca Batley**

The melodrama of Cleopatra VII's political and not-so-private life has been well explored. What is less well known is that Cleopatra and Mark Antony had three children, including a daughter, Kleopatra Selene.



22

# THE UNLUCKY MUMMY

**Jane Mulder**

So, you think you know the story of the Unlucky Mummy? Think again. **Jane Mulder** explores the myths and the surprising truth about *THAT* mummy board.



29

# SPIRIT BIRDS

**Lesley Jackson**

Not only could Egypt's birds represent a specific deity, but also a number of concepts that were crucial to the Egyptians enjoying a successful afterlife.



40

# THE ROYAL TOMBS

**Aidan Dodson**

In this final abridged instalment of Aidan Dodson's *The Royal Tombs of Ancient Egypt*, the New Kingdom pharaohs embrace Senwosret III's innovation, separate their tombs and temples, and head underground.



58

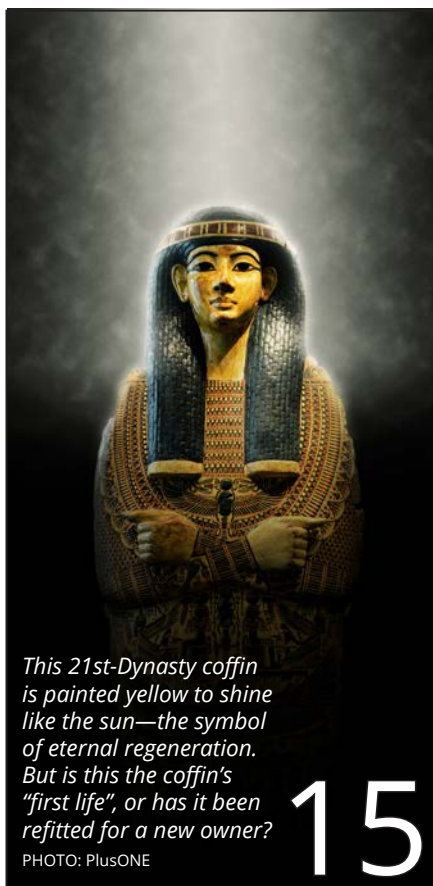
# WHAT'S NEW?

**Jeff Burzacott**

Alexandria's "Big Black Sarcophagus" surprises with some impressed gold sheets, and the world's oldest cheese yet discovered turns out to be the *real* evil.



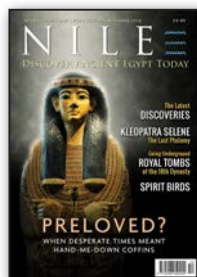
# NILE



*This 21st-Dynasty coffin is painted yellow to shine like the sun—the symbol of eternal regeneration. But is this the coffin's "first life", or has it been refitted for a new owner?*

PHOTO: PLUSONE

# 15



## THE COVER

### ARCE UPDATE: COFFIN REUSE

Jeff Burzacott

Was tomb robbery the lawless abhorrence we have always believed, or were there more sanctioned, but veiled, practices at work? In a special ARCE (*American Research Center in Egypt*) Update, we look at Kara Cooney's study into "legal" coffin reuse. (Spoiler alert: there's a lot of it!)

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## FROM THE EDITOR

**W**E HAD OUR OWN "Library of Alexandria" tragedy last month when the news broke about the catastrophic fire in the National Museum in Brazil.

It's heartbreaking to think that only an estimated 10% of the museum's collection has been spared. The entire Egyptian section is believed to have been destroyed.

I can't imagine an Egyptologist anywhere in the world who doesn't shudder when they think about what was lost. That's why it's important to safeguard what we have left: photographs. You've probably read the brief article on page 1. Please contribute with your own pictures if you can.

On the lighter side, I'm delighted to see that the humble NILE Quiz has been promoted to a fully-fledged crossword. I'm grateful to Keith Payne from *www.emhotep.net* for his creativity and hard work, and I invite you to give it a try on the next page.

Welcome to issue #16. I hope you love your NILE time!

Jeff Burzacott   
editor@nilemagazine.com.au



© JAAP JAN HEMMES

*The goddess Hathor gifts eternal life to Thutmose IV (out of frame); a scene from the king's tomb (KV 43). It's one of the 18th-Dynasty royal tombs that Aidan Dodson explores from page 40.*



# NILE

## The NILE Crossword

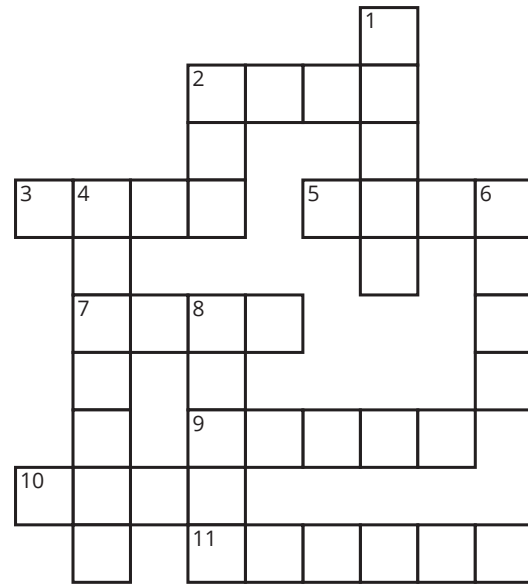
Hi Nile Quizzers,

Please welcome a new member to the **NILE** team: Keith Payne, founder of the popular *Em Hotep* BBS Facebook group, and *www.emhotep.net*, which is an online resource.

Keith has turned our regular **NILE** Quiz feature into a fabulous crossword; a Herculean skill which, in my opinion, should be recognised as an Olympic sport. As always, every clue has been sourced from this issue of **NILE** Magazine. Thanks Keith, and welcome aboard.

Jeff Burzacott, Editor

(You can check your answers on page 28.)



### Across

2. American Research Center in Egypt, abbr.
3. Ancient Egyptian symbol for "life".
5. Kara Cooney's work suggests that raiding an ancestor's \_\_\_ goods was not taboo.
7. Ostrich feathers are known for their association with \_\_\_, the goddess of truth and harmony.
9. The most ironic thing about the "mummy's curse" is that there was no \_\_\_ involved!
10. In order to placate his deceased \_\_\_, Pinudjem II placed a scroll and writing board in her tomb, asking her spirit to remain peaceful.
11. A daughter of Cleopatra VII, she was intended to continue the Ptolemaic Dynasty, but alas...












### Down

1. The *benu* bird was inspired by the Grey \_\_\_.
2. Only by completing the trials of the underworld could the deceased become an \_\_\_.
4. Juba II, whose father was the conquered king of \_\_\_, became a friend of Augustus.
6. The \_\_\_ bird was a manifestation of the *ba* of the sun god Ra.
8. Mother of Amenhotep I: \_\_\_-Neferty (using Aidan Dodson's spelling).



JACQUES DESCLOITRES, MODIS RAPID RESPONSE TEAM, NASA/GSFC



	YEAR	DYNASTY	IN THIS ISSUE ...
PTOLEMAIC PERIOD	332-30BC	Ptolemaic	 210 B.C. Terracotta Warriors p.6  280 B.C. Colossus of Rhodes p.58  438 B.C. Parthenon
		30	
LATE PERIOD	525-404	27	
	664-525	26	
3 <sup>RD</sup> I.P.	945-715	22 23	 p.22
	1069-945	21	 p.15
	1186-1069	20	 p.29
NEW KINGDOM	1295-1186	19	
	1550-1295	18	 p.40
2 <sup>ND</sup> I.P.	1650-1550	15 17 16 A*	
MIDDLE KINGDOM	1795-1650	13 14	 1800 B.C. Code of Hammurabi
	1985-1795	12	
1 <sup>ST</sup> I.P.	2125-1985	9-10 11	 2100 B.C. Ziggurat of Ur
		7-8	
OLD KINGDOM	2345-2181	6	
	2494-2345	5	
	2613-2494	4	 2500 B.C. Stonehenge
	2686-2613	3	
EARLY DYNASTIC PERIOD	2890-2686	2	
	3100-2890	1	 p.36

(A\* = Abydos Dynasty)



# KLEOPATRA SELENE

## The Last Ptolemy



**T**HE NAMES OF **CLEOPATRA VII**, Queen of Egypt, and her Roman Triumvir Mark Antony, echo throughout history. Their bloody and passionate love affair has been retold and reimagined almost as many times as that of their tragic end.

Their defeat at the Battle of Actium, and Cleopatra's subsequent suicide, in a final act of defiance against Rome, is the stuff of legend. What is less well known is that Cleopatra and Mark Antony had three children: twins Alexander Helios and Kleopatra Selene and another younger son Ptolemy Philadelphus.

### ABOVE

Diademed and draped, this coin features Kleopatra Selene, the only daughter of Cleopatra VII. As we'll learn, both Kleopatra Selene and her husband Juba II, came from families that had been destroyed by Rome. Yet while Juba embraced Roman culture, Selene was loyal to her family's Greco-Egyptian Ptolemaic line, and virtually ignored her father's Roman heritage.

Without fail, coins of Selene show her name and title in Greek (the language of the Ptolemaic rulers of Egypt), such as "ΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΣΑ ΚΛΕΟΠΑΤΡΑ" ("Queen Kleopatra"), as shown here—the same title used by her (in)famous mother.



**WHEN ROME CLOSED IN**, Cleopatra's thoughts had turned to her children's survival. Caesarion, her eldest son by Caesar, was sent east only to be betrayed, overtaken by Romans and executed. Her younger children by Antony were sent south to Thebes, presumably in the hope they could wait out the disaster and escape Roman clutches. These three children, through their mother, claimed descent from Alexander the Great, and through their father, kinship to Octavian and the elite of Rome; they could never be allowed to go free.

Alexander Helios and Ptolemy Philadelphus disappear from history but Kleopatra Selene does not, and from the ashes of Egypt and



The Tomb of Marc Antony and Cleopatra, whose suicides ended a bitter and bloody Roman civil war.

After the death of Julius Caesar in 44 B.C., control of the Roman state was divided between his heirs Octavian and Marc Antony, sparking a Roman civil war. Antony allied himself with the Egyptian queen Cleopatra against Octavian. After their horrendous naval defeat at Actium in 31 B.C., Cleopatra and Antony fled to Egypt, where they both committed suicide, he with a sword, she, apparently, with poisonous snakes.

According to the 14th-century French writer, Boccaccio, Octavian had their bodies placed side by side.

In the early 15th century the anonymous French manuscript artist, the Boucicaut Master, recreated their tombs as a single structure in the European Gothic style, rather than as Egyptian monuments. The carved effigies of Cleopatra and Mark Antony display the implements of their deaths, the sword and the snake. The identity of the two men standing before the tomb are not named.

THE J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM, LOS ANGELES.  
ACC. NO. MS. 63, FOL. 209.  
DIGITAL IMAGE COURTESY OF THE GETTY'S OPEN CONTENT PROGRAM.

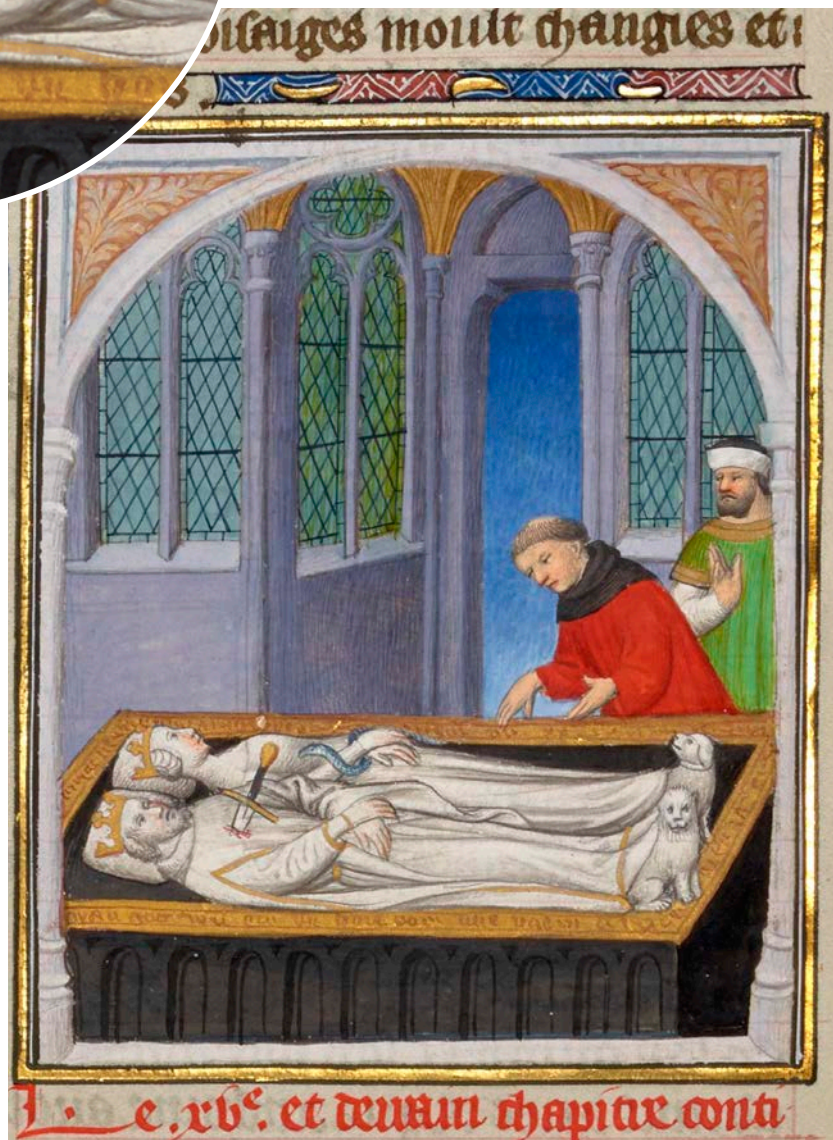
the blood of Rome she becomes Egypt's great survivor.

Kleopatra Selene and her brother were born sometime towards the end of 40 B.C., almost certainly in the Ptolemaic splendour of Alexandria with its immense Pharos.

The previous year her parents had formally met when Cleopatra had been summoned to meet Rome's new ruler of her eastern territories, Mark Antony, at Tarsus. Cleopatra knew that following Caesar's death she and her son Caesarion had been left dangerously isolated and unprotected within Roman politics.

Following his victory alongside Octavian at the Battle of Philippi over Caesar's assassins, Antony was flush with success and power. To cement their alliance, Antony married Octavian's sister Octavia. Moreover, his agreement to split the empire with Octavian, it seemed, would usher in a period of peace and stability for Rome. He was, therefore, the man Cleopatra needed to protect her and Egypt, and she set out to impress.

The 1st-century Greek author Plutarch tells us that she arrived "reclining on a barge, burning on the water... coloured with beaten gold and purple", and that for Antony it was love at first sight. Cleopatra had calculated well; by displaying her kingdom's vast wealth, she could scarcely have been more appealing to the







# AUGUSTUS

Roman historian Suetonius, born around 50 years after Augustus died, recorded his legendary appearance:

*"Augustus was remarkably handsome and of very graceful gait even as an old man; but negligent of his personal appearance. He cared so little about his hair that, to save time, he would have two or three barbers working hurriedly on it together, and meanwhile read or write something. . . ."*

*"Augustus' eyes were clear and bright, and he liked to believe that they shone with a sort of divine radiance; it gave him profound pleasure if anyone at whom he glanced keenly dropped his head as though dazzled by looking into the sun. . . ."*

*"He always wore so serene an expression, whether talking or in repose, that a Gallic chief once confessed to his compatriots: 'When granted an audience with the Emperor during his passage across the Alps I would have carried out my plan of hurling him over a cliff had not the sight of that tranquil face softened my heart; so I desisted.'"*

*This marble head of Augustus, is dated to the first century B.C.*

THE J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM, LOS ANGELES.  
ACC. NO. 78.AA.261.  
DIGITAL IMAGE COURTESY OF THE GETTY'S OPEN CONTENT PROGRAM.

debt-ridden Antony, who needed money to continue his Parthian campaign. Her decadent, self-indulgent, luxurious court, also appealed to his infamously hedonist nature and must have been a breath of fresh air after the serious political atmosphere of Rome.

Mark Antony stayed in Egypt until the spring of 40 B.C., and when he finally left to meet Octavian in Rome, Cleopatra was pregnant.

## DAUGHTER OF EGYPT

Cleopatra had borne a baby by Rome before; her elder son Caesarion was the son of Julius Caesar, but this fact seems to have been disputed during antiquity, bestowing upon him an uncertain status in the minds of many Romans. No such doubts surround the parentage of her next three children— that Mark Antony was their father seems never to have been in doubt.

The exact date of Kleopatra Selene's birth is unknown, but the date can be narrowed down to sometime in the autumn of 40 B.C. Kleopatra's twin brother, Alexander Helios, was named for Alexander the Great, and Kleopatra

Selene, for her mother. Sun and Moon together, they were the embodiment of Antony and Cleopatra's dreams for a new Egyptian Golden Age.

Antony did not immediately return to Egypt and would not meet his children for another three years. This meant that the earliest years of Kleopatra Selene's life were spent with her mother at the Egyptian court, where she was established as one of her mother's heirs.

In 37 B.C. Antony summoned Cleopatra to Antioch in Syria. It was the first time they had seen each other in several years, and it seems probable that Kleopatra Selene travelled with her mother to meet and be formally acknowledged by her father. Things for Antony had been going well, and over the next few years he and Cleopatra made plans for the rebuilding of the great Ptolemaic empire as it had been under the mighty Ptolemy I.

The next clear glimpse we get of Kleopatra Selene is three years later, in 34 B.C. Ultimately Antony's military campaigns in Parthia were a failure, but he returned regardless to Alexandria in triumph, hailed as a conquering hero. Soon after his arrival he and Cleopatra held the Donations of Alexandria in the city's gymnasium. Described by Greek

## CLEOPATRA VII

*It is sometimes said that once Egypt had succumbed to Rome, the Romans spent considerable effort to wipe out the memory and legacy of Cleopatra. In fact, once Octavian/Augustus had eliminated the threat to his power base (Marc Antony and Cleopatra) and the potential challenge to Julius Caesar's succession (Caesarion), he moved on.*

*Reminders of Cleopatra, however, remained in Rome for centuries. According to Greek historian Appian, writing in the second century, Julius Caesar had commissioned the Roman Temple of Venus Genetrix, and "placed a beautiful image of Cleopatra by the side of the goddess, which stands there to this day....", well over 150 years later.*

*As Edith Flamarion writes in Cleopatra: From History to Legend, "To the ancients, Cleopatra was an intriguing if incidental actor in the larger-than-life drama of Greece and Rome.... Today, popular culture has largely reversed that view: the splendid Egyptian queen tends to eclipse her Roman counterparts."*

*This limestone statue of a Ptolemaic Queen, with a mix of Egyptian and Roman influences, is widely thought to represent Cleopatra VII.*

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART. GIFT OF JOSEPH W. DREXEL, 1889. ACC. NO. 89.2.660.



historian Strabo as the most beautiful of Alexandria's public buildings with a vast portico and a grove next to the courtroom, it was a magnificent setting.

The Donations was a public spectacle by Cleopatra VII and Mark Antony in which they distributed lands held by Rome and Parthia amongst Cleopatra's children and granted them many titles, especially for Caesarion, son of the late Julius Caesar.

Cleopatra was dressed as Isis and sat with Antony, enthroned on a dais alongside Caesarion, Alexander Helios, Kleopatra Selene and Ptolemy Philadelphus, Kleopatra Selene's youngest brother probably born sometime in 36 B.C. Her eldest brother Caesarion was declared King of Egypt; her mother the Queen to rule over Kings and Kleopatra Selene was made Queen of Crete and Cyrenaica.

To anyone watching, the dynastic ambition in these appointments would have been glaringly obvious. Still young children of around six, Kleopatra Selene and her brother were in no position to rule these lands immediately, but it was clear that it was intended they would be doing so as soon as possible.

The Donations of Alexandria enraged Octavian. Not

only was Antony distributing Roman territories without permission, but because they acknowledged Caesarion as the legitimate biological heir of Julius Caesar, Octavian's position as Caesar's adopted heir was undermined. He began to make plans to move against Antony and Egypt. Ten years of resentment and personal annoyance boiled over, and relations between the two men quickly fell apart, along with them any hope of an enduring peace between Rome and Egypt.

Preparations for a military confrontation were swift and less than thorough, but nevertheless, the forces of Antony and Cleopatra met those of Octavian at the Battle of Actium on the 2nd of September 31 B.C. Octavian won the day, and Antony and Cleopatra had no choice but to flee back to Alexandria. It appears Kleopatra Selene and her brothers were in Alexandria at this time and they would have heard the devastating news perhaps from a terrified nurse or a tutor commanded to apprise them of the situation.

Antony suffered a collapse following their defeat and retreated into solitude, but Cleopatra was already planning how best to appease Rome. She attempted to betray Antony to Octavian and then to abdicate, but it soon became





*This bronze statue, with its tall pyramidal hat, may portray Alexander Helios, the twin brother of Kleopatra Selene.*

*The Metropolitan Museum of Art, which now cares for the statue, points out that the boy's costume is unusual in Greco-Roman sculpture, and recalls the type of garments worn in far-Eastern regions of the Roman Empire—especially in Armenia. The workmanship, however, suggests that it was most likely made in a Greek workshop, probably in Alexandria.*

*The boy looks only five or six years old, but gestures with an air of grandeur, while holding part of a handle or staff.*

*"What child," asks the Met, "could already be so important at such a young age that he was depicted in a regal manner and oriental attire? The most recent suggestion is that he depicts Alexander Helios, who was only five or six years old when his father conquered Armenia. At this time (34 B.C.), Antony declared his young son king of the newly-acquired territory. This small statue, just 63 cm tall, may have been made to adorn a sanctuary devoted to the cult of the royal house.*

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART. EDITH PERRY CHAPMAN FUND, 1949. ACC. NO. 49.13.



abundantly clear that Octavian was not interested in coming to terms and by the summer of 30 B.C. he was in Egypt.

Predicting Octavian's arrival, Cleopatra sent her eldest son to India; her other three children she sent south to Thebes. Her intention seems to have been that there they could wait out the storm, away from Rome's gaze.

Caesarion was now King of Egypt, but his flight to India was intercepted, and he was killed on Octavian's orders. With their elder brother dead Alexander Helios and Kleopatra Selene were the rulers of Egypt and Octavian wasted no time in bringing them from Thebes back to Alexandria to await, under guard, Egypt's official annexation by the Roman Empire.

### ORPHAN OF ROME

Though the child of a Roman Triumvir, all of Kleopatra Selene's life thus far had been in Egypt. She had been raised and educated as an Egyptian princess and would have been acutely aware of the ancient bloodline to which she belonged. Now, all that was over, and Kleopatra Selene and

her brothers were taken swiftly to Rome by Octavian as prisoners. Here they were marched in his triumph in the place of their dead mother, who was depicted in effigy with a snake to her breast. They were dressed as their namesakes, the sun and the moon, and placed in golden chains so heavy it is said they could hardly walk. Neither would set foot in Egypt again.

Octavian was now using the name Augustus, bestowed by a grateful Senate for bringing the war to a successful conclusion. He placed the children under the guardianship of his sister Octavia. Here they lived alongside Antony's son by his first marriage (to Fulvia), Iullus Antonius and their half-sisters, born of their father's marriage to Octavia, both called Antonia. Octavia's elder children also lived



In 34 B.C., Cleopatra and Marc Antony led a theatrical public spectacle called the Donations of Alexandria (see page 8). The power couple staged a pseudo coronation ritual, granting territory and titles to Cleopatra's four children (three of whom were Antony's as well). Six-year-old Kleopatra Selene was assigned Crete and Cyrenai-ca. From this point, coins issued in each of these territories bore the image of a crocodile to sym-bolise Egypt and Selene's Ptolemaic ancestry.

This motif was a favourite of Kleopatra Selene's, and it perhaps also recalled the beginnings of the dynasty, which was aided, according to legend, by Nile crocodiles.

The story goes that after Alexander the Great's death, his general, Ptolemy I, stole the late leader's body to be entombed in the harbourside centre he had founded. Another of Alexander's commanders, Perdiccas, saw this as a challenge to his plans for the throne and took his forces into Egypt to retrieve the body. The soldiers were decimated by crocodiles as they tried to cross the Nile, and Perdiccas was turned-on by his own officers.



NUMISMATICA ARS CLASSICA NAC AG, AUCTION 100, LOT 1151.



Kleopatra Selene was probably around 15-years old when she married Juba II (pictured, left), who was nearly ten years her senior. Juba was the son of King Juba I who had ruled over Numidia, located in what is now Algeria and part of Tunisia.

After losing his father in a battle fighting the Romans, Juba II was brought to Rome and raised by Augustus' sister, Octavia. Despite his father's rebellious allegiances, Juba II was loyal to the imperial court. In an odd twist, it is likely that he fought in Rome's navy at the Battle of Actium, which marked the beginning of the end for Selene's parents, Antony and Cleopatra.

Many of the coins minted by Kleopatra Selene during her marriage to Juba II (left and above) bore a Nile crocodile motif. While Juba's name on these coins was written in Latin (REX IVBA), Selene's name and titles were given in Greek. Evidently Augustus wasn't bothered (or threatened) by Cleopatra Selene's steadfast adherence to her family's Egyptian roots.

there: her son Marcellus and two daughters, all of whom would have played an important part of Kleopatra Selene's everyday life as she settled into Rome.

Octavia was regarded in Rome as a warm, caring woman, and whatever her thoughts regarding Antony's actions were, and we can never know, she took care of the children of Egypt without complaint. We know practically nothing of Kleopatra Selene's life in Rome—Augustus took great care to keep her out of the public consciousness—but we can infer some idea of what her day-to-day activities might have been from those of other contemporary noblewomen.

Roman women were valued for their chastity, modesty and reputation. Women of noble birth were also well educated, schooled in languages, geography, and other suitable subjects. Kleopatra may well have attended such classes

alongside Antonia, Marcellus and Augustus' daughter Julia. Girls were also taught weaving and household management, in preparation for the marriages they would be expected to make. As the ward of the emperor's sister, Kleopatra Selene likely also attended imperial dinner parties, Octavia's charitable works and religious ceremonies.

Why the children of Antony and Cleopatra were not put to death is a relatively easy question to answer: Augustus had wanted to take Cleopatra alive to parade her in the triumph. In her absence, her children served that purpose—but it was more than that. Octavian for many years had been setting a precedent and "collecting" the royal children of kingdoms annexed by Rome in order to Romanize them. His thinking was that by doing so, he could in the future use them as the client kings of foreign lands. In this manner,





© BIBLIOTHECA ALEXANDRINA ANTIQUITIES MUSEUM. INV. NO. BAAM 1079. PHOTO BY CHRISTOPH GERIGK

*This granodiorite head is thought to be Caesarion (Ptolemaios XV), son of Cleopatra VII and Julius Caesar.*

*Dated to the 1st century B.C. the head blends both traditional Egyptian and Ptolemaic Greek features. The face is that of a youthful boy and is naturalistic in appearance, suggesting a Greek rather than Egyptian model. The inclusion of the hair is also not Egyptian, but a feature that appears on many of the Ptolemaic statues with Greek features. The face, however, is framed by an Egyptian nemes headdress, and above the forehead is a worn Egyptian uraeus.*

*This head is 80cm high, which means the statue to which it once belonged is estimated to have been a colossal five metres tall.*

*Slightly worn after centuries underwater, this head was found in the eastern part of Alexandria's ancient harbour opposite the sunken island of Antirrhodos, on which a Ptolemaic palace was sited. It is now in the collection of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina Antiquities Museum in Alexandria.*

*Ptolemaic statues, bearing both Egyptian and Greek features like this one, began to be produced during the reign of Ptolemy V (205–180 B.C.) and continued to be made until the time of the last Ptolemaic ruler, Caesarion.*

*The next issue of NILE Magazine (#17, Dec '18–Jan '19) features more of the treasures from the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in an article by the Director of the museum, Dr. Hussein Bassir.*

they would become accustomed to Rome and her ways, and importantly, remain loyal to her.

One such royal child was Juba II, named after his father, the king of Numidia. Juba I had supported the Pompeian side in the Roman civil war between Pompey the Great and Julius Caesar. After Juba I's defeat by Caesar, he committed suicide. Juba II had been given into Octavia's care after Caesar's assassination and had become a model Roman citizen; he served alongside Marcellus in the Roman army and had become a good friend of Augustus. He almost certainly fought alongside him at the Battle of Actium. We have no way of knowing when Kleopatra Selene met Juba, but it was to become one of the most successful relationships to come out of ancient Rome.

## WIFE AND QUEEN

Octavia's care of Kleopatra Selene extended to involving herself in the matter of her betrothal, and she played a key role in bringing about her marriage to Juba. They were married between 26–20 B.C. and Augustus bestowed upon Kleopatra Selene a large dowry before sending the newly-

weds to rule as his client King and Queen in Mauretania.

The new kingdom of Mauretania was vast and encompassed most of modern-day Algeria and Morocco. It had a number of Roman and older Greek colonies but was disorganised, and its trade routes were poorly maintained.

Juba and Kleopatra Selene refounded there the city of Iol which they renamed Caesarea in honour of Augustus. It is interesting that Kleopatra Selene was established as a Queen in her own right, as evidenced by the coinage she immediately began to issue under her own name. Not for the first time, her coinage featured the crocodile motif; a deliberate nod to her Egyptian heritage (see page 11).

The rebuilding programme in Caesarea was extensive, and completed in a mixture of Roman and Egyptian styles, the most obvious Egyptian example being the Alexandrian style Pharos that was erected in the harbour. The city was built on a street grid system and included a great palace, monumental halls, a theatre and temples, where archaeology has attested to them having been dedicated to both Roman and Egyptian gods—further evidence of Kleopatra Selene's continued advertising of her Ptolemaic Egyptian



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*This silver denarius featuring King Juba II on the left, and his son Ptolemy (by Kleopatra Selene) on the right, was minted around A.D. 24.*

*Juba outlived Kleopatra Selene by almost 30 years. He died around A.D. 23, having established a co-regency with Ptolemy during the last four years of his life.*

*In late 40, Emperor Caligula invited Ptolemy to Rome and welcomed him with appropriate honours. Ptolemy was*

*confirmed as king and an ally and friend of the empire, but he was soon assassinated by order of Caligula.*

*Why Ptolemy was done away with is unclear. Roman historian Dio Cassius later wrote that Caligula wanted Ptolemy out of the way to claim the wealth of Mauretania (which became a Roman province after Juba's death); others suggested that Ptolemy was implicated in a plot against the emperor, but ultimately no one knows.*

heritage. Recently Algerian archaeologists have uncovered pyramid structures dating to Kleopatra Selene's reign; perhaps yet another Egyptian architectural echo.

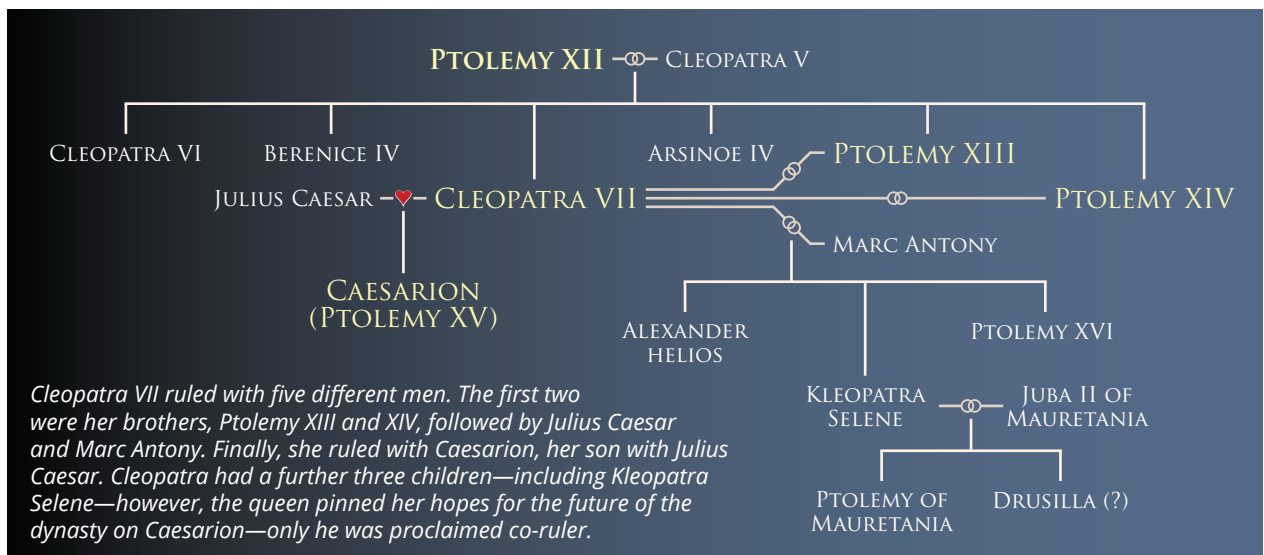
Mauretania flourished under their rule as a trading and cultural centre. They re-established key trade routes and goods such as figs, purple dye, pearls and spices flooded into the kingdom. The court of Juba II and Kleopatra Selene also attracted scholars and artists from all over the Roman world; Juba II himself wrote many treatises, most notably on the natural world.

Sometime in around 10 B.C. Kleopatra Selene bore a son, Ptolemy—named for the maternal dynasty to which

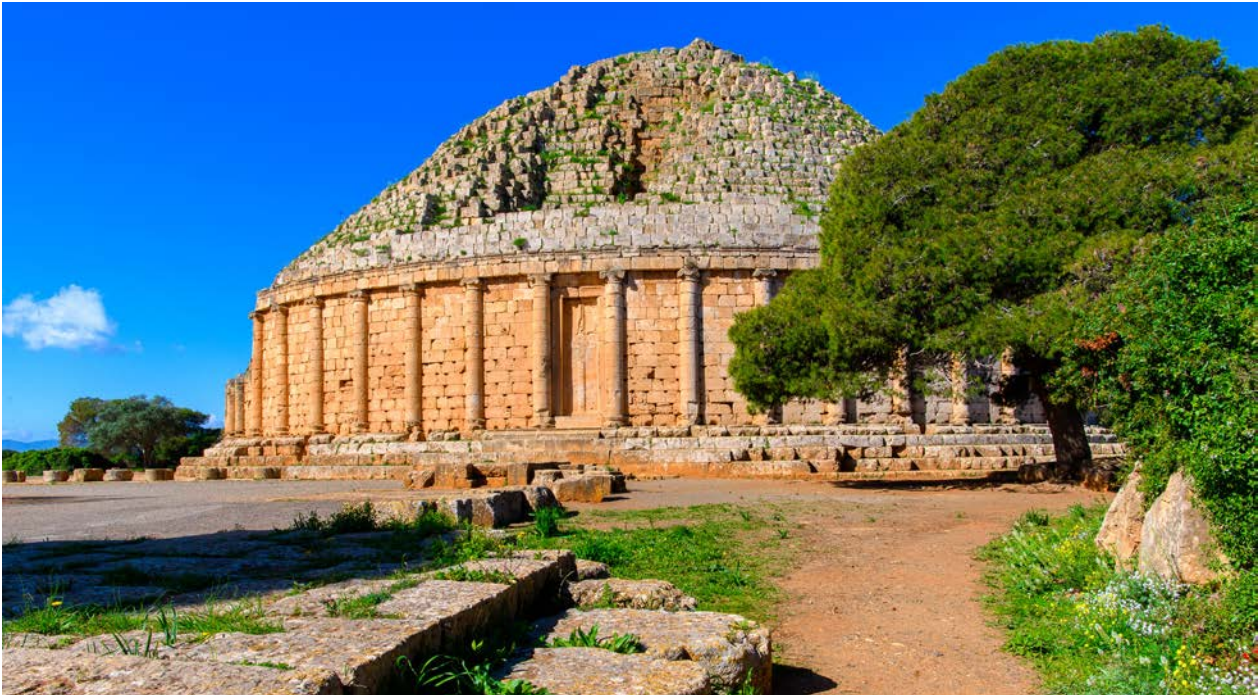
he belonged. It was a distinctly Graeco-Egyptian name that spoke then, as now, to Kleopatra Selene's pride in her ancestry being reflected in every aspect of her rule.

There also exists an Athenian inscription by the Roman historian Tacitus which is dedicated to a daughter of Juba II, possibly named as Drusilla, granddaughter of Antony and Cleopatra. This girl could possibly be a daughter of Kleopatra Selene, however, the chronology for this is sketchy.

Kleopatra Selene and Juba II were two of the most successful client rulers to come out of Rome and they ruled over a rich, prosperous and peaceful kingdom for 20 years. Kleopatra Selene died at about the age of 35 in around A.D.







© ANTON IVANOV

The Royal Mausoleum of Mauretania in modern-day Tipaza, Algeria. This is where Juba II and Cleopatra Selene II were supposedly buried, although any remains on the site have long disappeared. The mausoleum is probably the building that the 1st-century Roman geographer Pomponi-

us Mela described as “the communal mausoleum of the royal family”, suggesting that the mausoleum was intended a dynastic funeral monument for their royal descendants. As far as we know, the family line died with the assassination of their son, Ptolemy (see below).

5/6 and was buried in the Mausoleum of Mauretania (above). Her death may have coincided with a lunar eclipse, as famously recorded by the Roman court poet, Crinagoras of Mytilene:

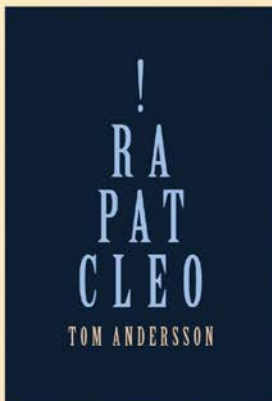
“The moon herself grew dark, rising at sunset,  
Covering her suffering in the night,  
Because she saw her beautiful namesake Selene,  
Breathless descending into Hades,  
With her she had the beauty of her light in common,  
And mingled her own darkness with her death.”

Juba II died in A.D. 23 and Ptolemy who had ruled alongside his father for several years succeeded him as king of Mauretania. He would later be assassinated on the orders of

Emperor Caligula. Of any surviving daughter, there is no further mention. The kingdom of Mauretania was soon divided into smaller client states, and the memory of Kleopatra Selene’s life and rule began to fade. Her life had been one born of violence and loss, but ultimately it was also one of courage and above all survival.



REBECCA BATLEY is an archaeologist, historian and writer, with a degree in Archaeology and MA in Classics. She has worked for many years in the field across Britain, Europe and the Middle East. She is currently researching the life of Mark Antony.



Loud-voiced Rome takes the judge’s seat.  
“A word,” Egypt calls to the strapping boy. “A word, Rome, before your verdict! By what rule will you rate us?”  
“By what rule? Why, by the measurable outcomes you have produced for us!”

A philosophical-new-amusing look at our last queen ...  
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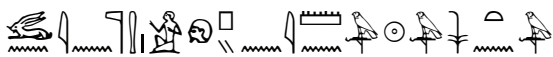
PHOTO: MARISSA STEVENS. BY KIND PERMISSION OF NATIONAL MUSEUMS SCOTLAND



ARCE's support of Kara Cooney's 21st Dynasty Coffins Project is helping to deliver surprising results. Just one example is at the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh, where 60% of the 21st-Dynasty coffins examined (above) showed evidence of reuse.

Egypt's 21st Dynasty saw her neighbours fall under a confederacy of invaders, and luxury wood imports halted. No coffin meant no rebirth, so now, reusing an ancestor's coffin became the only possible option for the spiritual well-being of one's loved ones.

At the same time, Theban elites abandoned the ostentatious tomb complexes that had become beacons to thieves. Instead, burials became communal and more easily guarded. Expensive tomb decorations and lavish funerary goods decreased, and the focus now went on the minimum essentials for rebirth: the coffin and the mummy. As tomb decoration decreased, coffin decoration increased, and the interiors of 21st-Dynasty coffins were decorated for the first time (above). Coffins effectively became discrete tombs into which the body was placed.



*"The High Priest of Amun-Re, King*



*of the Gods, Khonsuemheb, sat down and wept..."*

The High Priest was clearly rattled. He had just listened to a heart-wrenching tale from a man who had once lived almost 500 years earlier. In the late 20th-Dynasty tale known as *Khonsuemheb and the Ghost*, the High Priest is haunted by a distressed 17th-Dynasty *akh*, who appears to be cold, hungry and homeless, and faces a bleak eternity.

For the ancient Egyptians, this story reinforced a familiar warning of what happens when the living fail the dead: their name forgotten, their offerings neglected and their

coffin and tomb damaged or destroyed. The happy ending in this story is that Khonsuemheb promises the unhappy *akh* to rebuild his tomb, commission a replacement coffin of gold and precious wood, and reestablish his offering cult.

The importance to the Egyptians of a secure spot to become an aspect of Osiris and enjoy immortality was still powerful a thousand years later, when, in the 1st century B.C., Greek writer Diodorus Siculus wrote:

*"For the inhabitants of Egypt consider the period of this life of no account whatever, but place the greatest value on the time after death when they will be remembered for their virtue... consequently they give less thought to the furnishing of their houses but in the manner of their burials they do not forgo any excess of zeal."*





BRITISH MUSEUM. ACC. NO. EA 29579. PHOTO: REMY HIRAMOTO  
COURTESY TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM

*The inner coffin lid of Muthotep was found in Thebes in the late 19th century and was soon shipped off to the U.K. and made its way to the British Museum. This wasn't, however, the first time that the coffin had been pulled into the daylight since first being interred.*

*One of the easiest ways to spot coffin reuse is by spotting old decoration underneath later styles. Here, the broken plaster on the coffin of Muthotep in the British Museum shows the older 19th-Dynasty decoration below the newer 20th-Dynasty surface.*

## THE MYSTERY

Today it makes headlines when a tomb is discovered that appears to be untouched: having escaped the ravages of tomb robbers and stocked with the necessary funerary assemblage to ensure a comfortable forever-after. However, ongoing research by Kara Cooney at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) suggests that even when an “intact” tomb is unearthed, it may not quite be as untouched as we had once thought.

A big part of ARCE's mission is to support leading research on Egyptian history and culture. Its important support of Kara Cooney's 21st Dynasty Coffins Project is helping to shift the long-established narrative surrounding tomb robbery in ancient Egypt.

Today, Kara Cooney is Associate Professor of Egyptian Art and Architecture at UCLA. As a PhD student, however, she became intrigued by something others had noticed before, but not explored to any great depth: the overwhelming number of surviving Egyptian coffins from the 21st Dynasty (ca. 1069–945 B.C.). Only about eighty 19th and 20th Dynasty coffins survive (from a period lasting some 225 years). In contrast, over 800 coffins dated to the 21st-Dynasty remain in museums around the world—and this was from a 120-year period known for political instability, economic crisis and rampant tomb plundering.

The intrigue deepened when it was observed that some of these 21st Dynasty coffins showed obvious signs of reuse: a new owner's name was inscribed over the original occupant. In the past, some of these coffins had been described as bearing an “archaizing” style, i.e. with antique design features. However, a closer look sometimes revealed the names of more than one owner, or a hint of old decoration

beneath later remodelling. Rather than being built in an old-fashioned style, it seems they indeed *were* old-fashioned coffins that had been reused. Were the great numbers of 21st-Dynasty coffins simply older coffins that had been reemployed?

## THE 21ST DYNASTY COFFINS OF DB 320

In late 2016, Dr. Cooney's curiosity led to Cairo's Egyptian Museum to examine the most famous (and understudied) collection of 21st-Dynasty coffins anywhere: those of the High Priests of Amun from DB 320. Thanks to amazing access provided by museum staff, and assistance provided by ARCE for the volumes of paperwork and permissions required by multiple government agencies, “Team Kara” was able to study this assemblage of coffins more thoroughly than anyone had for over a century.

These belonged to the powerful clergy and their families who assumed control over Thebes and Upper Egypt when the last Ramesside king died at the end of the 20th Dynasty. The Amun priesthood shared strong family links with the new “official” dynasty—the 21st—which now ruled from the northern Delta, and the two connected houses entered into a power-sharing arrangement to govern the whole of Egypt. The Theban priestly elite became the effective kings of Upper Egypt.

Their communal family tomb, DB 320 in Western Thebes, eventually became a Royal Cache, also holding the battered mummies of many of the great New Kingdom rulers whose burials had been plundered by the Theban priesthood to fund their administration.

What Cooney and her team discovered when examining the coffins of the 21st Dynasty priestly elite was astounding.



*A detail of the exposed 19th-Dynasty decoration on Muthotep's coffin in the British Museum.*

*While coffin reuse was largely driven by the responsibility to provide one's dearly departed the materials necessary to live forever, there were social motivations as well.*

*Funerary rituals often involved noisy, public processions that often included musicians, singers and professional mourners paid to fill out the crowd and wail convincingly.*

*The funeral was a great opportunity for the deceased's family to display their wealth and social standing.*

*During earlier periods, the funeral procession would include the lavish furniture and gilded shrines being carried to the tomb—very conspicuous displays of wealth. In the 21st Dynasty, however, with a much smaller budget and leaner attitude to funerary goods, the attention shifted to one essential item: the coffin.*

ing. For the 31 coffins they studied, the reuse rate was 100%

### A COFFIN'S JOB

A reused coffin suggests an extreme situation: the blessed dead being hauled from their places of rest to free-up something more valuable: their rich funerary goods.

For the chance to live forever, an ancient Egyptian with means needed more than thoughts and prayers. They needed *things*: tangible, material devices infused with magic. The most important of these was a coffin—a vessel for rebirth as an Osiris, able to explore eternity as a transformed spirit.

The fact that every single coffin from the DB 320 cache had been appropriated from prior burials paints a vivid picture of desperation; the wealthiest, most powerful, most privileged families in Theban society were forced to enter the afterlife in second-hand coffins. What had created this crisis? Historians call it the Bronze Age Collapse.

### THE END OF AN ERA

Around 1150 B.C., during Egypt's 20th Dynasty, almost every major Bronze Age civilisation around the Mediterranean and the Middle East collapsed—in less than the span of a human lifetime. Its beginnings may have been a withering drought across Europe, leading to widespread hunger and desperate people on the move. It ended with devastating conflict as state after state fell under swathes of dispossessed foreigners.

Egypt repelled waves of “Sea Peoples” and Libyans intent on making Egypt their home, but the kingdom became

increasingly isolated and the economy struggled. For Thebes, somewhat quarantined from the worst of the “action”, one of the biggest impacts was the loss of lucrative trade routes. The city's elite had long relied on luxury imported materials to make the coffins which were essential for a successful afterlife. Eternity was now at stake and some tough choices needed to be made.

### THE CHOICE

For a culture that relied on magically-infused materials to access the afterlife, the collapse of the trade networks was a disaster. It is at this point that we realise that Kara Cooney's work on 21st-Dynasty coffins is equally a study of human behaviour—how the Theban elites reacted and adapted as the world they knew changed around them.

With fresh materials in short supply, the Thebans were faced with two options: abandon the creation of coffins, or adapt: move towards less materialist burial practices—and *find* coffin material somewhere. It probably wasn't a tough choice. Faced with the prospect of “going it alone” into the afterlife without the benefit of a coffin to be ritually reactivated, or reusing an older coffin.

We usually look upon tomb robbery as deviant behaviour and a crime. Indeed, official records of sacked tomb inspections and the interrogation and subsequent confessions of thieves, such as in the *Tomb Robbery Papyri*, have informed us of the Egyptian ideal: an elaborate burial in a robust, secure tomb where the deceased could see out eternity. Yet, when times got tough, rather than shift their





PHOTO: MARISSA STEVENS. BY KIND PERMISSION OF NATIONAL MUSEUMS SCOTLAND

*Kara Cooney closely examines a coffin lid and case ensemble in the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh. The join between the two parts can reveal important clues regarding the coffin's reuse.*

*As the 21st Dynasty continued, the craftsmen charged with adapting reused coffins became more skilled, and their improved techniques became more difficult to detect. One telling sign that a coffin has been reused is when a coffin lid doesn't fit the case. They have been brought together from different funerary assemblages.*

*The evidence for reuse between coffins can vary widely. Some reusers simply inscribed a new name onto an otherwise unchanged coffin. Others replaced the name and altered the decorations to reflect a gender reassignment.*

*In some cases, coffins may have been scrubbed of decoration and fully dismantled to provide material for new coffins. Alternatively, the deceased may have been given their new (temporary) home without any changes to the coffin whatsoever. There's no way of telling the extent to which this happened, but we can safely assume that it happened at least some of the time, so reuse rates are no doubt higher than what the visible evidence reveals.*

funerary rituals, they chose to tap into a precious resource buried in the Theban hills.

For us today, it's hard to get used to the idea of coffin reuse. After all, a coffin bearing the face and name of an individual seems such a personal thing. But perhaps we have become so used to the idea of a coffin providing the continued protection of the dead that we have forgotten a coffin's primary purpose: the ritual transformation of the dead—right after death. Coffins provided an immediate function that didn't need to last forever.

While a permanent home in the West was certainly the ideal, during times of scarcity, coffins could easily be reused to provide the same function for the next person. Simply put, the needs of the newly dead took precedence over the older dead.

### IT'S SHOWTIME

The chance to give a deceased loved one a successful rebirth as Osiris was not only a powerful motivator to access a "pre-loved" coffin, it was a family obligation. It wasn't the only driving factor, however. Many Egyptian tombs display scenes of long, noisy funerary processions, designed to showcase the material wealth of the deceased's family. A funeral was an ostentatious opportunity to showcase a family's social standing.

As Dr. Cooney told [NILE Magazine](#), for a culture that

relied on magically-infused materials to not only secure the afterlife needs of a family member, but also to boost the social status of the living, it would have been a bigger "crime" not to access an available supply of previously used wood.

### A FAMILY AFFAIR

Thanks to funding from ARCE, Kara and her team have studied coffins in major collections around the world, with reuse rates averaging 60%. Some coffins reveal two reuses or more! With such a high proportion of reuse, Dr. Cooney proposes that most funerary reuse was "legal", that is, "most occurrences happened in family tombs, by the owners of those tombs, reusing ancestors' coffins. . . or was performed by high officials [in older, unclaimed tombs]. . ." This wasn't the work of a back-alley operation by a handful of thieves; tomb "robbery" and reuse was a part of life. As Dr. Cooney puts it, "this was a community-wide cultural agreement to continuously break the link between the person and coffin, to conventionalise a coffin's transformation from sacred to commodity and back again."

Rather than securing coffins in tombs with the intent that they never again see the light of day, the evidence shows that some coffins have enjoyed the sunshine many times over—and collected the admiring gazes of onlookers during showy funeral processions.

It is this conspicuous display of wealth that may explain

The outer coffin of the High Priest of Amun, Pinudjem I, has been the recipient of both reuse and blatant theft.

This coffin lid and the matching base formerly belonged to the 18th Dynasty's Thutmose I, who ruled some 400 years earlier. The lid had been redecorated and reinscribed by Pinudjem I for his own use.

However, when found in the Royal Cache tomb (DB 320), Pinudjem I was in a different coffin entirely; one belonging to Queen Ahhotep (Cairo Acc. No. CG 61006), the mother of King Ahmose, founder of the 18th Dynasty. The coffin that Pinudjem I had appropriated from Thutmose had, in the end, served its purpose; the mummy of Thutmose I was found in his own coffin that had been returned to him, although bearing Pinudjem I's name.

It was Pinudjem I's grandson, Pinudjem II, who established DB 320 as a family cache tomb, and it may have been when Pinudjem I's coffin was being moved into it that the gilding on the face was adzed off.

With trade and tribute at a stand-still, the High Priests of Amun turned to a rich resource to fund their regime: the royal burials in the Valley of the Kings. Pinudjem I's coffin may well have lost its gold as part of this state-sponsored looting.

Although the attack on the gilding on Pinudjem I's coffin was thorough, the perpetrators appear to have been careful to avoid overly-damaging the face. The coffin's eyes, nose and mouth have been treated lightly, evidently to allow the ruler to continue to see, smell and eat in the afterlife.



CATALOGUE GÉNÉRAL DES ANTIQUITÉS ÉGYPTIENNES DU MUSÉE DU CAIRE, 1909. ACC. NO. CG 61025.

the scarcity of contemporary references to coffin reuse. After all, why document the fact that Grandma Meryt's shiny new coffin was actually a family hand-me-down?

#### WHERE ARE THE BODIES?

One curiosity that Dr. Cooney mentioned to NILE was the number of coffins they have examined with a blank space where the deceased's name should be. Cooney suspects that these pieces may be examples of what she calls "parish coffins", rented out by a temple or priest to families without the means to purchase a coffin outright. Once again we see the focus on what Cooney explains as "the value of short-

term, transformative ritual activity at the expense of the permanent protection a coffin might provide.

It would also serve to explain some of the uncoffined mummies that are often found in tombs—particularly in communal burials. Previously, it has largely been thought that uncoffined mummies belonged to people with family connections to a tomb, but without the finances to fund a coffin for eternity.

#### THE GUILT FACTOR

How did the Egyptian *feel* about disinterring their deceased ancestors and reusing their funerary materials? One on



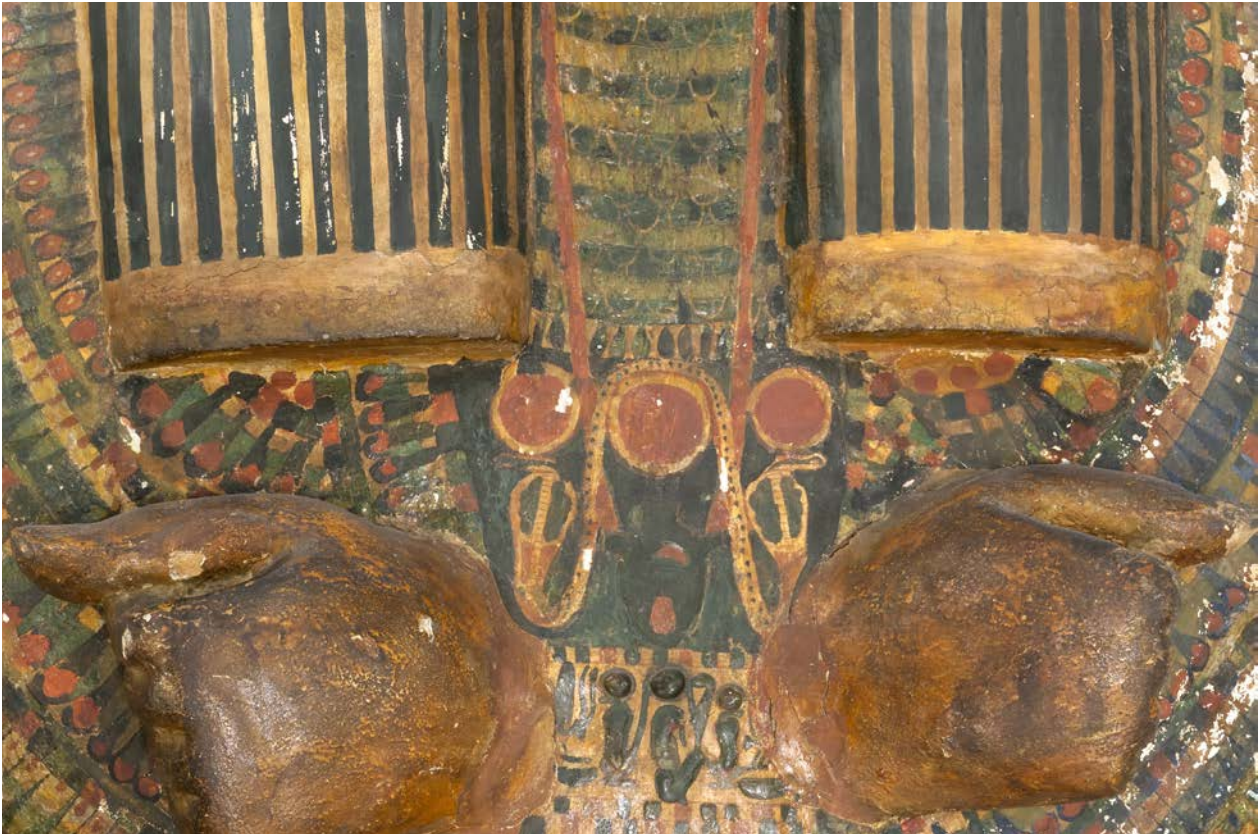


PHOTO: NEIL CRAWFORD. COURTESY OF MUSÉE DU LOUVRE. INV. AF 9593.


Modifying the gender was another common result of coffin reuse. It often didn't take a lot of changes to turn a female coffin, for example, into a male one: modify the wig, lose the earrings, get rid of the breasts and change the hands.

Female hands are typically shown open and flat against their chests. Popularly thought to portray a woman's more "passive" role, the flat hands could have a link to the goddess Hathor, resembling the ivory clappers used in her rituals. The male clenched hand was connected with expressions of power and authority, and perhaps symbolically linking the deceased with Osiris, who is shown holding his distinguishing symbols of crook and flail.

Interestingly, while the old name was usually scrubbed off, the name of the new owner didn't always replace it.

Kara Cooney reports that "there are many such reused coffins which retain a varnished blank where the name should have been inscribed."

The above coffin (Louvre AF 9593) belonged initially to a woman and was redecorated for a man. The hands were changed and the pectoral and collar repainted after the breasts were removed. The touch-up work is of much lower quality and a tell-tale sign of reuse.


Most of the rest of the decoration was left untouched. In fact, while the name of the previous female owner was removed, the people responsible for the reuse left behind the feminine title "Shemayet en Imun" , "Chantress of Amun" on the lid. Perhaps the reusers didn't have the time, funds or energy to change it.

hand there is the official record of inspections of sacked tombs and the brutal interrogation of suspected thieves, such as the *Tomb Robbery Papyri*. But written references of private robbery are rare and veiled. This is surprising in a society where those most able to afford coffins (and thus prone to become the target of thieves) are also the most literate. As Cooney suggests, however, if legitimate reappropriation was the norm, then there would have been no reason to document it, "unless there was a dispute or problem among those engaging in such activities that demanded a record."

Regardless of whether the practice was widespread or not, it's hard to imagine that no one was ever uneasy about taking from the dead to serve the living. Despite assurances that Uncle Kenamun was already an *akh* spirit and didn't need his coffin anymore, were any of his relatives fearful that he might be upset about having his body disturbed and that nice, expensive coffin hauled away? Perhaps one way of managing the risk of an unsettled spirit causing trouble was with magical spells and rituals.

When the family tomb of the High Priests of Amun at Deir el-Bahari (DB 320) was discovered in 1881, one of the original occupants found inside was Princess Nesykhonsu. She was a daughter of Smendes II, and niece (as well as wife) of Pinudjem II, both of whom were successive High Priests of Amun during the 21st Dynasty.

Inside Nesykhonsu's coffin was a papyrus roll and a writing board which both contained a text that may hint at measures taken by Pinudjem to protect himself from an angry, deceased wife. Part of the document, now known as the *Funerary Decree by Amun for Princess Nesykhonsu*, sees Nesykhonsu's spirit being deified and receiving the eternal blessings and protection of Amun-Re. Cooney explains that it then goes on to demand "that her afterlife manifestations, particularly her ba spirit and heart, cause no harm to her husband..."

  
"Her heart shall not turn away from him."





*Looks can be deceiving. The breasts on this anonymous mummy board were created in plaster, and appear, upon close examination to have been added after the headdress. However, this isn't necessarily a sign of reuse. It may be that the original craftsmen decided to switch the board's gender after much of it had been completed, or perhaps*

*that was simply the process they used: adding the breasts after the headdress.*

*Amber Myers Wells, research associate for "Team Kara", told NILE Magazine that this mummy cover "is an example of the nuance and attention to detail required in Kara's study of reuse."*

Why did Pinudjem II feel the need to curtail the after-life powers of his deceased niece/wife? Cooney suggests that this Funerary Decree "could represent a rare written attestation of the kinds of verbal temple rituals performed when harm (intentional or not) was done to a given person's funerary ensemble or tomb."

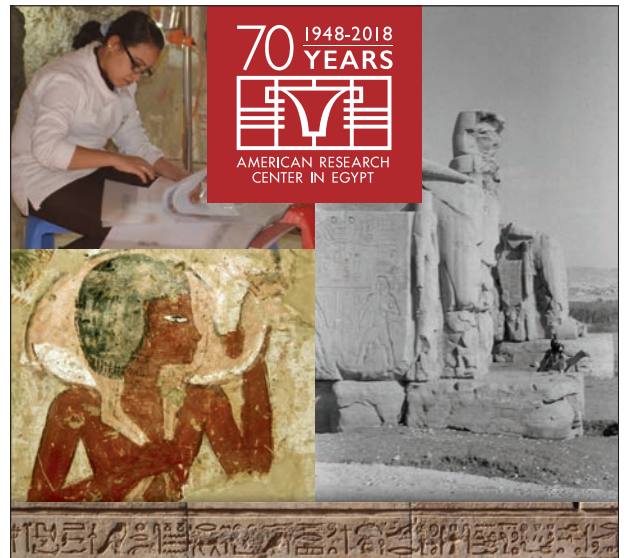
It appears that something might have happened (or was about to happen) to Nesykhonsu's funerary equipment, and Pinudjem II felt it was important to keep her afterlife self at peace. Whether this was out of guilt or self-preservation, we'll probably never know.

#### ARCE'S SUPPORT

Kara Cooney still has a lot of coffins to look at. Thanks to ARCE's Antiquities Endowment Fund and UCLA, her team headed back to Cairo's Egyptian Museum in September. This time it was to study the coffins into which the royals had been placed before being rounded up in the 21st Dynasty and hidden in DB 320. These coffins were replacements for the golden originals that the pharaohs and their family members were likely interred in.

We look forward to keeping you updated with Kara Cooney's research on "legal" coffin reuse in ancient Egypt, and how the Thebans adapted to one of the greatest crises their world had ever seen.

You can learn more about the conservation, excavation and research projects supported by ARCE's Antiquities Endowment Fund throughout Egypt at [www.arce.org](http://www.arce.org).



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# THE UNLUCKY MUMMY

Strange myths abound, warning of the curse to be visited on those who disturb ancient Egyptian burials, the most famous “victim” being Lord Carnarvon, who died not long after Howard Carter opened Tutankhamun’s tomb. But there is an even older account of a mummy’s curse.

## THE CURSE

**J**UST LIKE A FISHERMAN’S TALE of “the one that got away”, the story of the Unlucky Mummy grows with every telling. First published in a front-page article by a journalist named Bertram Fletcher Robinson (a close friend of the famous spiritualist, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle), the story appeared in London’s *Daily Express* in June 1904. It was cheerfully titled, “A Priestess of Death”. Today, it’s hard to find two versions that agree in the dark details, but this is generally how the story goes:

In the late 1860s, a “Mr. D.” and four friends arrived in Luxor while on a dahabiya cruise up the Nile. One night they were approached by a local, and offered a mummy case belonging to a priestess of Amun-Ra. The 1904 article explains they were “impressed by its remarkable beauty and by the curious face of the woman portrayed, a face that was filled with a cold malignancy of expression, unpleasant to witness.”

As each was keen to acquire the masterpiece, they drew lots, and the winner, “Mr. W.,” paid several thousand pounds

for it. This trip of a lifetime now took a sudden turn for the worse. The next day one of the men inexplicably walked out into the desert, never to return. One of his companions was accidentally shot in the arm, which was so badly damaged that it had to be amputated. The “lucky” bidder of the coffin was not to enjoy his acquisition for long. According to the 1904 *Daily Express* story, “Mr. W.” arrived in Cairo to find he had “lost a large part of his fortune. He died soon afterwards.” Later versions of the story talk of another of the party becoming so ill that he could no longer work and was reduced to selling matches on the street.

Eventually, the coffin arrived in England and was given to “Mr. W.’s” sister. “From the day the case entered the house misfortune followed misfortune,” wrote Robinson in the *Daily Express*.

A photograph taken of the mummy case revealed instead “a living Egyptian woman staring straight before her with an expression of singular malevolence.” The photographer died shortly afterwards.

### (FACING PAGE)

*The “Unlucky Mummy” in the British Museum is really a wooden cover, sometimes called a “mummy board”. Covers like this were placed on top of the mummy, which would lie inside one or two wooden coffins decorated in a very similar fashion. No inscriptions on the board identify the deceased, presumably because that task would have been performed by the outer coffins.*

*The British Museum states that “the wooden board was covered in plaster... with many of the decorative elements modelled in the plaster to give the appearance of raised relief... On the shoulders of the mummy-board is a massive coloured collar, below which is a series of complex scenes... One of the coffin’s functions, other than to*

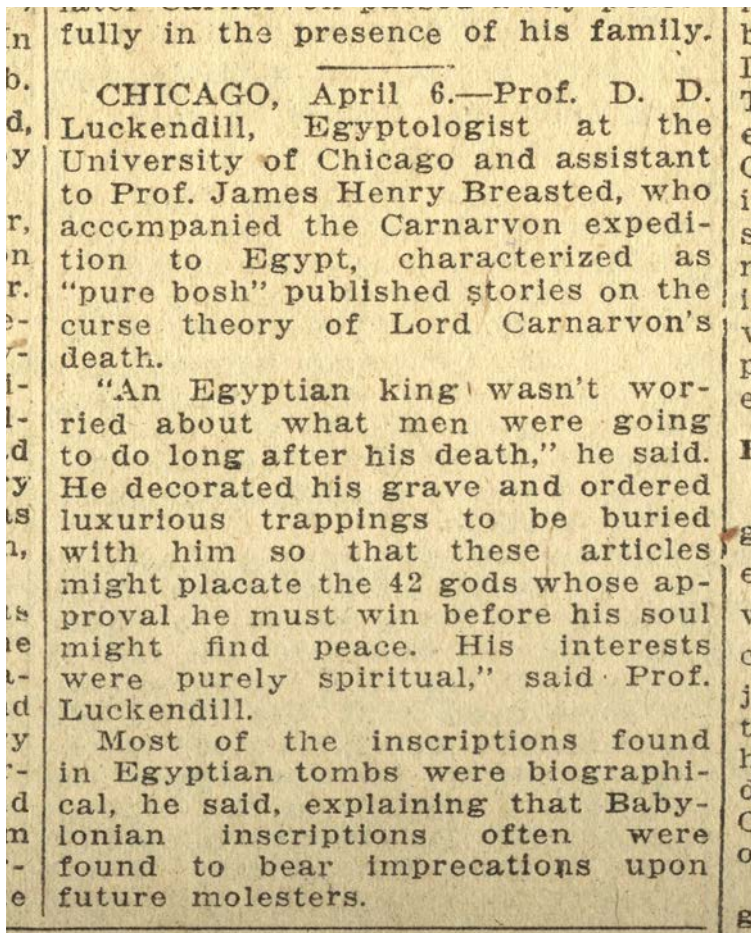
*act as a container for the body, was to serve as a microcosm, setting the deceased within the larger environment of the universe itself; thus the plentiful solar and Osirian symbolism, essential to assist the person’s rebirth, figures prominently. The decoration, usual in the 21st Dynasty, is perhaps the most elaborate example of this.”*

*The “Curator’s comments” section for the mummy board on the British Museum website addresses the “Unlucky Mummy” phenomenon, and states that it is “perhaps best known for the strange folkloric history attributed to it... None of these stories has any basis in fact, but from time to time the strength of the rumours has led to a flood of enquiries.”*



COURTESY TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM  
ACC. NO. EA 22542.





THE EGYPTOLOGY LIBRARY OF PEGGY JOY

"Pure bosh". You can still feel Daniel Luckenbill (correct spelling) and James Breasted's exasperation at the mention of a curse in relation to Lord Carnarvon's untimely death.

This report was published in *The Detroit News*, the day after Howard Carter's wealthy patron died—just five months after the discovery of the first step leading down to Tutankhamun's tomb.

While it's likely that someone would have always brought up the "curse of the pharaohs", the tenacity of the rumour in 1923 may have been the result of a deal struck by Lord Carnarvon himself.

To help offset the phenomenal costs of excavating—as well as manage the daily cascade of media requests—Carnarvon sold the exclusive access rights to the tomb, its treasures and the excavators themselves, to *The Times of London*. Rival newspapers were forced to buy their information from *The Times*. It must have been incredibly galling.

In Luxor, British Egyptologist Arthur Weigall, a friend of Lord Carnarvon's and former Chief Inspector of Antiquities for Upper Egypt, found himself shut out of the tomb and its team, simply because he was acting as a correspondent for the *Daily Mail*. After Carnarvon's death, and in the absence of real information, Weigall reported on the whispers circulating of a strange curse. While Weigall didn't invent the curse, he certainly fanned its flames, knowing that the public back home would "lap it up".

Not willing to chance further misfortune, the sister donated the offending object to the British Museum. While the mummy case was being unloaded at the museum, the truck in which it had been transported unaccountably rolled backwards, trapping a passer-by, and one of the two men carrying the coffin up the stairs fell and broke his leg, while the second died suddenly two days later.

And that is where the original *Daily Express* story finishes, with Robinson professing that "every one of these facts is absolutely authentic. . . . It is certain that the Egyptians had powers which we in the twentieth century may laugh at, yet can never understand."

However, why let a good yarn end there? Other versions of the tale state that after the coffin was installed in the museum's Egyptian Room, the strange happenings continued. Frightened night watchmen reported hearing scratchings and sobbings coming from the coffin, while objects were often thrown around the gallery. When one of the watchmen died, the others threatened to resign. Visitors to the gallery weren't immune to the strange goings-on. When one man loudly scoffed at the rumours, his child contracted measles and died soon afterwards.

Now thoroughly alarmed, museum officials had the coffin moved down to the basement, but shortly afterwards, one of the helpers became seriously ill while his supervisor was found dead at his desk.

This was the last straw, and the museum sold the infamous object to a private collector. When continual misfortune and deaths haunted his family, the new owner hid the coffin in his attic, and then consulted a well-known medium,

Madame Helena Blavatsky, who informed him that the evil could not be exorcised from the mummy. As the *Daily Express* reported, Blavatsky advised that he "send away an object which she described as of the utmost danger". But, sensibly, as so many deaths and much misfortune attended the object, no British museum wanted it.

Enter a no-nonsense American collector who didn't believe in the myth. He bought the coffin and embarked with his prize on a brand-new "unsinkable" ship: the *Titanic*. When the liner foundered, the wily collector bribed one of the crew to put both him *and* the coffin on a lifeboat, and they were picked up by the *Carpathia*. After having landed safely in New York, the evil spirit of the long-dead priestess continued to wreak death and mayhem on those who came into contact with her.

Thoroughly browned-off by all the goings-on, our wealthy American sold the coffin to a collector from Montreal. But when the calamities continued, the new owner decided to ship it back to Europe on the *Empress of Ireland*. You've guessed it—the ship, along with its deadly cargo, sank in the St. Lawrence River on 29th May 1912, with 840 lives lost.

But what of the mummy? Yet again, it was miraculously saved from a watery grave. The Canadian, now a firm believer in the legend, decided it was time for the mummy to return to Egypt, so he booked it to sail on another doomed ship, the *Lusitania*. On 7th May 1915, *Lusitania* was torpedoed by a German submarine near the coast of Ireland, killing 1,200 people. What happened to the mummy thereafter is a mystery.



Incredibly, on 19 April 1912, just four days after the Titanic sank, The New York World newspaper ran an article dramatically titled, "The Ghost of the Titanic".

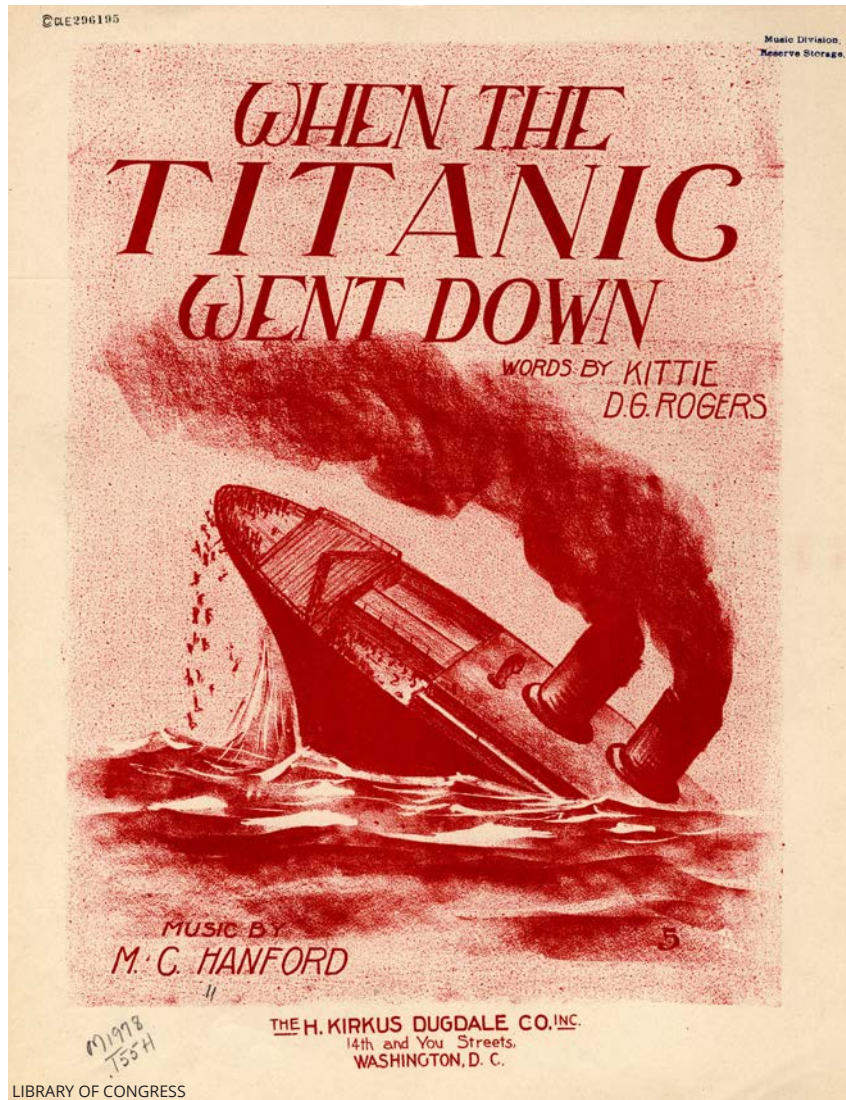
One of the passengers on board the rescue ship Carpathia, which arrived on the scene two hours after the Titanic sank was a newspaper reporter, Carlos F. Hurd. He landed the story of a lifetime.

On board the Carpathia, Hurd interviewed a Titanic survivor named Frederick Seward, a New York lawyer, who had sat next to W.T. Stead at the Titanic's saloon table. Mr. Seward recounted the conversation:

"He told a story of a mummy case in the British Museum, which he said had had amazing adventures, but which punished with great calamities any person who wrote its story. He told of one person after another who, he said, had come to grief after writing the story, and added that, although he knew it, he would never write it. He did not say whether ill-luck attached to the mere telling of it."

And that is how the Titanic-Unlucky Mummy connection began.

(RIGHT) What better way to pay tribute to the lives lost in the Titanic disaster than to bash out a song and sell the sheet music. This one was published in 1912.



## THE TRUTH

Well, so much for the legend. But what is the truth about the "Unlucky Mummy"? Well, like most good myths, it started off with a tiny grain of truth.

The valuable artefact was in the possession of a man named Arthur F. Wheeler ("Mr. W" from the 1904 *Daily Express* piece). It was either he or Douglas Murray ("Mr. D.") who purchased it in Egypt. Murray was a well-to-do London socialite who holidayed annually in Egypt and maintained an obsession with the supernatural.

In 1889, Wheeler's sister, Mrs. Warwick Hunt, presented the "Unlucky Mummy" to the British Museum on his behalf. It was here that the legend found its beginnings.

Murray was friends with William T. Stead, a newspaper editor with an interest in spiritualism and an eye for the sensational. When Bertram Fletcher Robinson, the author of the original *Daily Express* article, died in 1907—just three years after his article was published, and less than 40 years of age—William T. Stead saw an opportunity. Robinson became part of the "curse", and the story of the Unlucky Mummy was now syndicated around the world.

Murray and Stead, who claimed to see anguish on the face and in the eyes painted on the coffin lid, sought per-

mission to arrange a public séance in the gallery and to perform rituals in order to set the unhappy spirit to rest. Naturally, the Keeper of the Egyptian Collection, Ernest Wallis Budge, didn't agree, but the story went "viral", and gullible people from all walks of life and from many countries contributed money for floral wreaths to be placed in front of the mummy case! Of course, museum officials never went along with this, and no wreaths were purchased. (What happened to the money is open to conjecture.)

After the death of Lord Carnarvon in 1923, interest in the story of the "Unlucky Mummy" was revived again. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (friend of the late Bertram Robinson) suggested to reporters that "an evil elemental may have caused Lord Carnarvon's fatal illness", and the story took on a life of its own, leading to the convoluted myth recounted above.

And the truth of the matter? Far from being a coffin with mummy, the exquisitely painted object is a 162 cm inner coffin board from wood and plaster thought to be from the late 21st to early 22nd Dynasty (950–900 B.C.) which was found at Thebes. The mummy itself never left Egypt. Indeed Budge, in his book *The Mummy: A Handbook*



An Egyptian Mummy, two of which are said to be lately brought from Grand Cairo, and consigned to a Merchant of this City.



THE ancient Egyptians had three ways of embalming their dead, and artists were particularly trained up for that purpose: the most costly method was practised only upon persons of high rank; of which sort are all the mummies that have remained entire to the present times: It was done by extracting the brains thro' the nostrils, and injecting a rich balm in their stead; then opening the belly, and taking out the intestines, the cavity was washed with palm wine impregnated with spices, and filled with myrrh and other aromatics; this done, the body was laid in nitre 70 days, at the end of which it was taken out, cleaned, and swathed with fine linnen, gummed and ornamented with various hieroglyphics, expressive of the deceased's birth, character and rank. This process completed, the embalmer carried home the body, where it was placed in a coffin, cut in human shape, and then enclosed in an outer case, and placed upright against the wall of the burying place belonging to the family.—Another less expensive method of embalming was, by injecting into all the cavities of the body a certain dissolvent; which, being suffered to run off after a proper time, carried with it whatever was contained therein liquified; and then the body, thus purged, being dried by the nitrous process as before, the operation was closed by swathing, &c. By the third and lowest method of embalming, which was only in use among the poor, they drenched the body with injections, and then dried it with nitre.—The Egyptians had a custom among them of pledging the dead bodies of their parents and kindred, as a security for the payment of their debts, and whoever neglected to redeem them was held in the utmost abhorrence, and denied the rites of burial themselves.—They paid extravagant honours to their deceased ancestors; and there are at this day to be seen in Egypt pompous subterranean edifices, called by the Greeks Hypogees, representing towns or habitations under ground, in which there are streets or passages of communication from one to another, that the dead might have as free intercourse as when alive.

MR URBAN,

Kent, Aug. 5, 1751.

I Am not able to assign myself a reason why so many men's ages are recorded in scripture, and but one woman's. If some of your correspondents would give one, it would much oblige,

Your constant Reader G. P.

P.S. Abraham's wife is the only woman whose entire age is recorded in scripture.

\* Our learned correspondent E. Bute, in order to bring the long controversy he has been engaged in to a conclusion, reits the whole of the question in dispute upon one

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The article on the left was published in the August 1751 issue of London's The Gentleman's Magazine. It provides a thorough explanation of the mummification process, and describes the "pompous subterranean edifices" into which the deceased were buried. Pictured is "an Egyptian Mummy, two of which are said to be lately brought from Grand Cairo, and consigned to a Merchant of this City."

It's easy to understand how a body that seems to be defying the natural order of decay could be seen as unnatural—and very spooky. So it's no wonder that those who breach their tombs do so with racing hearts!

Over a thousand years before the above merchant arrived in London with two mummies amongst his luggage, the visit to an Egyptian tomb by a 7th century governor was so terrifying, that the tale was still being told in the 10th century, to the Iraqi traveller and historian, al-Mas'ūdi.

The story goes that upon being told that the tomb was piled high with treasure, the governor ordered an expedition to break in. As Prof. Michael Cooperson, writes in "The Reception of Pharaonic Egypt in Islamic Egypt" (2010), "His men uncover... steps leading down to a pedestal topped by the statue of rooster. When one of the workmen places his foot on the step, two swords pop out of the ground and cut him in half... the work continues but the curse cannot be beaten."

To quote al-Mas'ūdi: "Of the thousand men involved in digging, working, hauling earth, surveying the ground, and issuing orders, all died. Terrified, 'Abd al-Malik said, 'This is a strange ruin, and an unbreachable one....'"

of Egyptian Funerary Archaeology, stated that "this board was presented to the British Museum in 1889 by Mr. A. F. Wheeler and has been the subject of many paragraphs in the newspapers."

The board's lifelike face and beautiful, painted embellishments indicate a person of high rank. As no name appears on the coffin, it is not known to whom the coffin belonged, though the placement of the hands with extended fingers indicates that it was a woman. Although it was never proved that she was a priestess of Amun-Ra, early museum publications gave her that appellation.

The only occasions when the object was removed from the museum were during the two world wars (for safety), and decades later when it was included in temporary exhibitions in Australia and Taiwan.

The Unlucky Mummy was never in America, shipped on the Titanic, or sold to anyone at all. Indeed, the Trustees

of the British Museum are not empowered to sell or dispose of any of the museum's objects.

For the man who helped propagate the story of the curse, however, his cruise on the Titanic was unlucky. While the Unlucky Mummy was safe and sound in the British Museum on the night the Titanic sank, the body of W. T. Stead lay, as the 1912 *New York World* put it, "lifeless beneath 2000 fathoms of water."



JANE MULDER is a freelance travel writer with numerous published articles. She has been a member of The Egyptian Society of South Africa for over 20 years and coordinated Dr. Zahi Hawass' South African lecture tour. Jane also writes articles on ancient Egypt for the Society's newsletter, *SHEMU*.



# CURSES IN ANCIENT EGYPT

Jeff Burzacott

**T**HE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN DEAD faced a dilemma. On the one hand, they were reliant on the goodwill of the living for the maintenance of their funerary cult. On the other, attracting attention to one's tomb ran the risk of receiving another kind of attention: the unwelcome, tomb-desecrating kind.

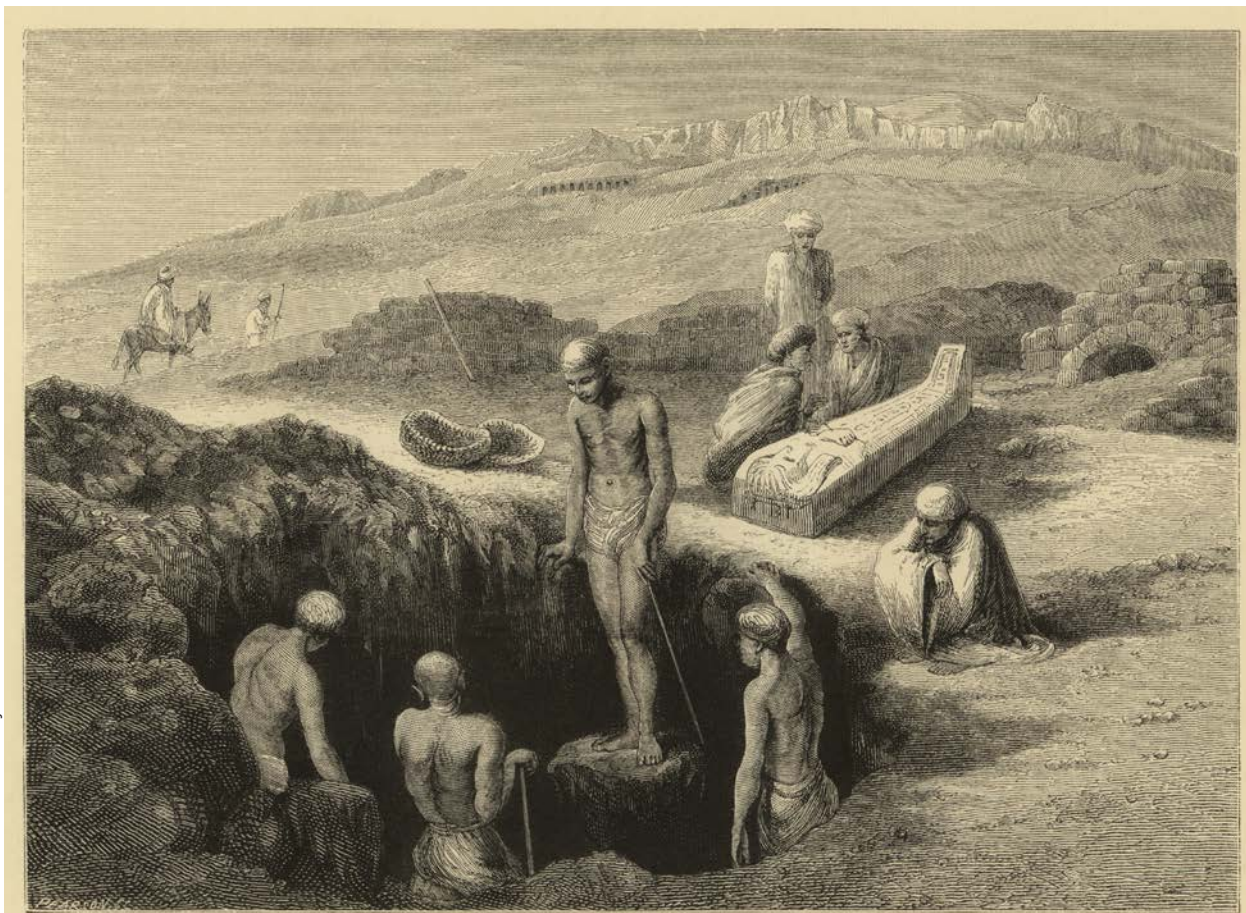
It may have been a response to the less-than-reliable manner in which previous funerary cults had been carried out, that wealthy tomb-owners began equipping their tombs with what are known as “appeals to the living”. These “appeals” were carved into the walls of accessible parts of the tomb, or on stelae, and were designed to catch the at-

tention of literate visitors to the tomb—or just anyone (again, literate) who happened to be passing—to say the offering formula. To the Egyptians, the power of words was almost palpable, and merely uttering the formula was enough to conjure up the necessary bread, beer, oxen and fowl, for the deceased's continued enjoyment in the afterlife.

These “appeals” are occasionally accompanied by threats or “curses”, warning of dire consequences to those who cause harm (or “evil”) to the tomb.

Many of the examples used when discussing ancient Egyptian “curses” come from “Appeal to the Living” texts.

The tradition began with late 5th-Dynasty government



DIGGING FOR MUMMIES.

"In this season of the year, the Egyptians, having little occasion to employ their time in the labours of the field, devote themselves to opening and plundering the tombs of their ancient countrymen, of every article that can tempt the European traveller to make it his own. The grave-clothes, bones, bitumen and mummy-chest, they leave exposed in the open air."— Robert Richardson, *Travels Along The Mediterranean, and Parts Adjacent...* (London, 1822).

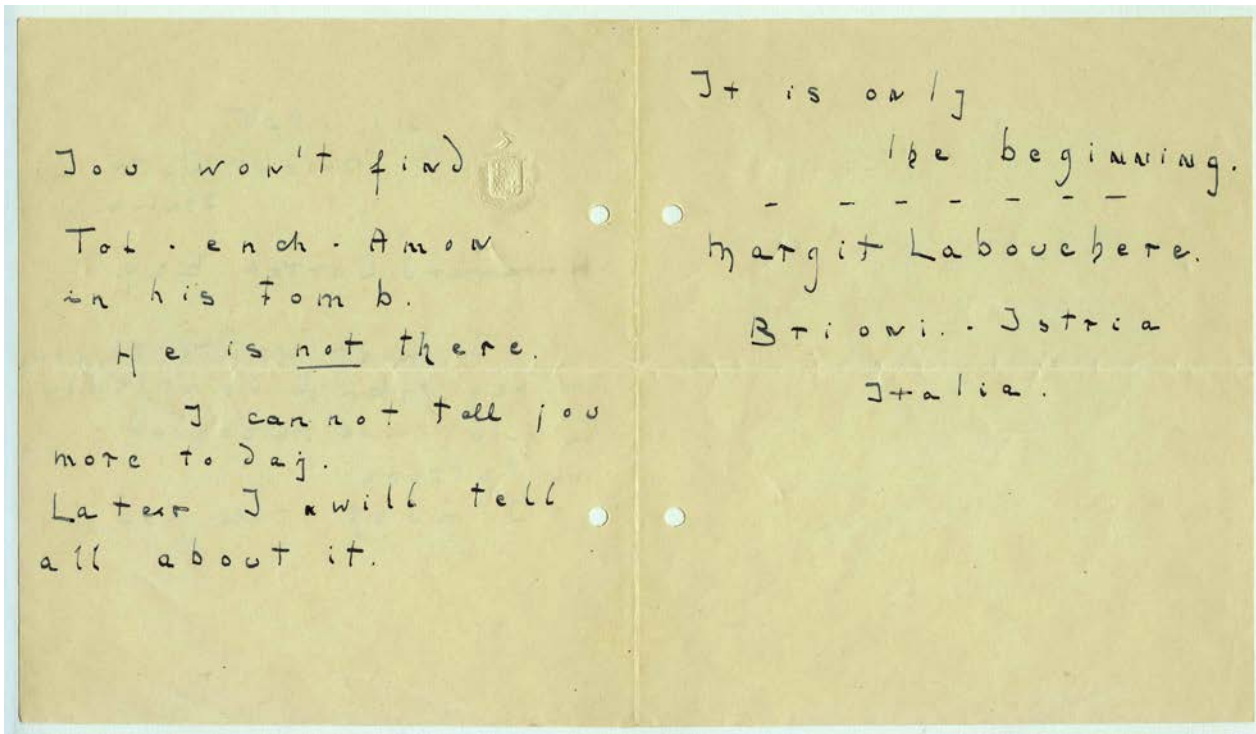
Sadly, the ancient Egyptians' "Appeals to the Living" and

their accompanying threats against those who would disrespect their tombs, were powerless against the attentions of modern tomb robbers.

This image comes from *A Thousand Miles up the Nile*, published in 1877 by Amelia B. Edwards. During her own Nile adventure four years earlier, Edwards was unsettled by the desperately vulnerable state of Egypt's tombs and temples after years of tomb robbing and treasure-seeking by local dealers and foreign tourists. Her disquiet led to the formation of the Egypt Exploration Fund (now Society) to help study and protect the monuments.

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“Fan” mail. When Howard Carter uncovered the tomb of King Tutankhamun in 1922 celebratory correspondence poured in from all around the world. He was also now a target for people like Margit Labouchere.


Ancient Egypt has always been a magnet for folk whose beliefs sit further out on the fringe: pseudo-science, the supernatural, the occult, etc. They seem keen to connect with the “ancient wisdom” that has been lost, and attempt to find legitimacy for their brand of quirky.

Margit Labouchere was a wealthy Swiss-born mystic, who believed she had clairvoyant powers. The discovery of Tutankhamun’s tomb—and particularly, his mummy in October 1925—was a stimulus for her to reach out to

Howard Carter and share what she “knew”.

In the latter half of the 1920s, Labouchere sent over a dozen short letters to Carter. The example above is dated to 1925. Each letter attempted to convince Carter that the mummy he discovered in KV 62 was not of the pharaoh Tutankhamun. If there was some kind of reasoning behind her bizarre theory, it was never provided.

Carter had held onto the letters for his entire life. Why? Perhaps, as a man of science, their eccentricity gave him a smile. Or, possibly, as the new owner of the letters suggests, “he kept them to serve as a reminder of the affect the discovery of the tomb and its mummy had, upon certain portions of the population.”

officials buried in Giza and Saqqara (ca. 2350 B.C.). Over 2000 years later, people were still trying to induce passers-by to lend a hand. Around 300 B.C., Petosiris, a priest of Thoth at Hermopolis Magna in Middle Egypt built a family tomb at nearby Tuna el-Gebel. Petosiris had the sad duty of burying his eldest son, Thothrekh , and, on his son’s behalf, carved an appeal directed at visitors:



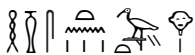
“O living ones who are upon the land who will come to this necropolis,

The grieving Petosiris wanted to ensure that his son’s name lived on forever:



May you pronounce (my) name while presenting offerings

In return, there are incentives:



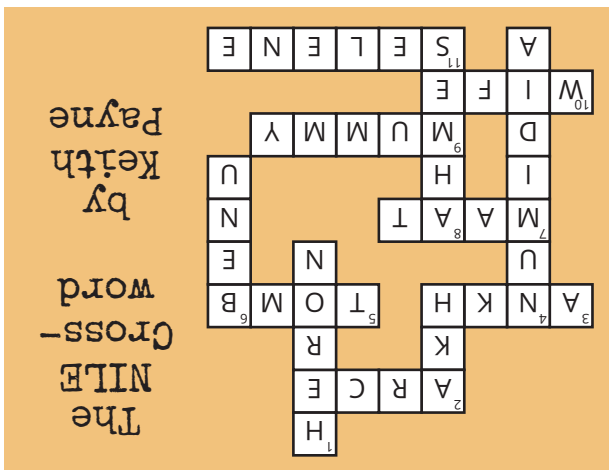
Thoth will praise you because of (it).

The “Appeal to the Living” can also include a few words to discourage unwelcome behaviour:



One who does evil against (me), [evil] will be done against him.

The final line of text in the “appeal” by Petosiris for Thothrekh is “I am a person whose name should be pronounced.” Perhaps, in light of the “curse”, two words should be added to that last line: “or else”.



LESLEY JACKSON

# SPIRIT BIRDS



Ancient Egypt was a land blessed with an abundance of birds. As well as the resident species, huge numbers passed through the country during the spring and autumn migrations. As the Egyptians believed that this world was a reflection of the divine realm, birds provided an important source of symbolism. Not only could they represent a specific deity, but also a number of concepts that were crucial to enjoying a successful afterlife.

This is the third of Lesley Jackson's four-part series on bird symbolism. Parts one and two were in issues #10 and #13 respectively.

(ABOVE)

THE BA-BIRD OF INHERKHAU PRAISES THE DECEASED (OUT OF FRAME) IN HIS TOMB (TT 359).  
FOR MORE ON THE BA-BIRD, SEE PAGE 32. PHOTO © JAAP JAN HEMMES





© JAAP JAN HEMMES


A scene from the tomb of Irynefer (TT 290) in the necropolis of the workmen's village at Deir el-Medina. Irynefer served under two kings: Seti I and Ramesses II (ca. 1279 B.C.), helping build the secret tombs in the Valley of the Kings.

Here the deceased stands in the solar barque worshipping the benu, one of the *bas* (physical manifestations) of the sun god of Heliopolis. Vignettes of the benu always show it as a grey heron, often wearing the solar disk.

## THE BENU BIRD

THE BEAUTIFUL ORANGE-RED PHOENIX is a very well-known fabled bird. Some people would be surprised, or even disappointed, to learn that the bird which may have inspired the legend is the Grey Heron (*Ardea cinera*). How did a grey water bird transform into a self-creating fiery sun bird?

The grey heron is still seen in Egypt. They are large, long-legged birds, standing up to one meter in height, with a long straight bill. A crest of two long feathers adds to an elegant profile. They are frequently seen standing motionless in, or adjacent to, shallow water waiting patiently for their prey. Herons are solitary—an important characteristic for a self-creating and self-renewing symbol.

The Egyptians called this bird the *benu* , the sacred bird of Heliopolis, and considered it one of the *bas* of the sun god Ra, i.e. one of the forms that Ra could take. The *benu* was the manifestation of the sun god at the instant of creation, and no doubt one into which the deceased was keen to transform. Just as Ra was self-creating (every morning at sunrise as well as at the instant of creation) so was the *benu*—a symbol of eternal renewal and rebirth.

There are spells in the funerary texts for being transformed into a *benu*, thus enabling the deceased to be reborn:



"I have entered as a falcon



I have gone forth as a *benu* bird. . . ."

(The Book of the Dead, Chapter 13)

Heart shaped amulets, inscribed with a spell, became popular in the New Kingdom. They were placed on the mummy to protect the heart. Some have the *benu* bird depicted on the front and spell 29B, from the Book of the Dead, inscribed on them:



"I am the Benu, the *ba* of Ra



who guides gods to the netherworld when they go forth. . . ."


(The Book of the Dead, Chapter 29B)



The presence of the *benu* bird aligns the deceased with Ra and the powers of regeneration and rebirth, as well with freedom of movement that any flying bird can symbolise. In the tomb scene opposite, the text above the heads of the two representations of Irynefer is a vignette from the Book of the Dead, providing a spell for becoming *benu*.

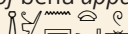
The heron's preferred method of hunting, perched on isolated rocks or standing in shallow water, suggested a link to the moment of creation when the primeval land first rose out of the pre-creation waters of *nun*, and life, in the form of the sun god, appeared. This sacred moment of creation was re-enacted each year when the waters of the Nile inundation began to recede, and land appeared from beneath the waters. From the Egyptians' point of view, the heron's association with the sun god and continual rebirth was a logical one. But how did the Greeks manage to reinterpret this as the phoenix?

Greek historian Herodotus, living in the 5th century B.C., said he had only seen the phoenix in paintings, "for it is very rare and visits the country... only at intervals of 500 years, on the occasion of the death of the parent bird... To judge by the paintings, its plumage is partly golden, partly red, and in shape and size it is exactly like an eagle." While that description sounds more like the Horus falcon than a heron, without knowledge of the heron's link with the inundation and the moment of creation it is easy to see how someone could envisage a self-generating solar bird to be a fiery-coloured creature.

When water levels or food supplies dwindle, herons move away in search of food, so the heron became associated with plenty. Chapter 110 of the Book of the Dead refers to the Field of Reeds (*sekhet-aaaru* , a lush, idealised version of Egypt, with boundless fields of wheat, intersected by waterways bursting with life. This place of abundance was symbolised by another heron: the "Heron of Plenty", who provided food for the spirits of the justified deceased.



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This beautifully-detailed image of *benu* appearing as a heron is from TT 359, the Theban Tomb of Inherkhau . Here the *benu* bird is wearing the Atef crown, therefore identifying Inherkhau with Osiris, as well as Ra. Accompanying this vignette is hieroglyphic text announcing the "Spell for becoming the *benu*, entering and going forth by Osiris, Overseer of the crew in the Place of Truth, Inherkhau, true of voice".





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Chapter 89 of the Book of the Dead allowed the ba of the deceased, after a day of enjoying the sunshine, to rejoin the mummy in the tomb. A vignette typically shows the ba, represented as a bird with a human head, flying over a mummy, symbolically uniting with it.

This scene comes from the Theban Tomb of Amenemiset

𓂏𓂏𓂏𓂏 (TT 277), a priest in the Memorial Temple of Amenhotep III during the 20th Dynasty.

Amenemiset's coffin has been placed on a funerary couch in the form of a lion. Beneath the couch are his funerary goods: four vases, a bag and some fabric. Hovering over the deceased is Amenemiset's ba.

## THE BA BIRD

WHILE THE BA IS OFTEN DESCRIBED as the “soul” of a person, as already mentioned on page 30 it is probably more accurately described as a “manifestation” or “form” of the deceased. In effect, it is the essence of the person without any physical attributes or constraints.

In iconography, a person's *ba* was represented as a human-headed bird. The human head denotes an individual, and the bird's body depicts the freedom of movement of the deceased, able to leave the netherworld and soak up the sun's creative energies.

Depictions of *ba*-birds vary, but they are often in the form of a falcon as this aligns the deceased with Horus. It is possible that the sight of swallows (or a similar species) nesting in tombs helped crystallise the concept of the *ba*-bird, with its freedom to leave the tomb, but always returning each night. This paralleled with the sun god Ra entering the underworld each night and reuniting with the corpse of Osiris, prior to the sun's rebirth at dawn. Naturally, there

are funerary spells for a human-swallow transformation:



“Spell for being transformed into a swallow.”

(The Book of the Dead, Chapter 86)

It was considered essential for the *ba* to reunite with the body at regular intervals. To ensure this occurred, the vignette to Spell 89 of the Book of the Dead featured a *ba*-bird shown hovering over the mummified body of the deceased (see above).



“Spell for enabling the *ba* to rest on one's corpse in the god's domain.”

(The Book of the Dead, Chapter 89)

Tomb reliefs also show the *ba*-bird fluttering above the deceased in the tomb chamber (above) or outside the tomb as it returns to the body (see opposite).





Pictured is a vignette from Spell 92 from the Book of the Dead, titled, "Spell to open the tomb for the ba and shadow of the deceased, so that he may go forth by day and have power in his legs".

This scene comes from the Tomb of Irynefer (TT 290) at Deir el-Medina, the royal tomb-builders' village near the Valley of the Kings. Irynefer served under two kings: Seti I and Ramesses II in the early 19th Dynasty. It seems that Irynefer had a lot of talented friends in the village and his tomb is one of the most colourful there.

The detail (left) shows Irynefer's Ba descending from heaven to join its mummy in the tomb.



© JAAP JAN HEMMES

(ABOVE and RIGHT) Irynefer's ba, wings folded, leaves the netherworld, represented by a black disk.

The dark silhouette standing in front of Irynefer's tomb chapel is his shadow (shewt  $\text{𓆎𓅓𓏏𓏏}$ ). In his book, Middle Egyptian, James P. Allen describes the shadow as "an essential adjunct to the body, since every body casts one. Because the shadow derives from the body, the Egyptians believed it had something of the body—and, therefore, of the body's owner—in it.

The shadow was said to accompany the deceased's ba when it emerged from the tomb each morning to share in the rising sun's rebirth.







© JAAP JAN HEMMES

When Amenhotep IV changed his name to Akhenaten, it established him as being “effective”. After all, Akhenaten (𓂏𓏏𓏏𓏏) literally means “Effective for Aten.”

Pictured is one of several blocks photographed sitting against the west side of the 2nd pylon at Karnak Temple. As the large cartouche on the right contains an early version

of Aten’s name, it is likely that the block came from one of the four temples constructed at Karnak during the first years of Akhenaten’s reign, before the move to Amarna.

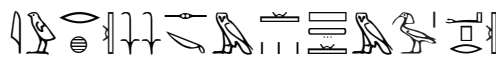
The last 18th-Dynasty king, Horemheb, targeted the Aten temples at Karnak, using the blocks as handy construction material for pylons two, nine and ten.

## THE AKH

IF THE CONCEPT OF THE BA can be confusing, then that of the *akh* is even more elusive. It is believed to be the state of being for the deceased after they had been elevated to a divine state. Sometimes *akh* is translated as “transfigured spirit”, i.e. transformed into a blessed, resurrected being that could dwell with the gods, yet still remain “effective” in the land of the living.

Egyptologist Lanny Bell explains that “*akh*-spirits were worshipped in domestic ancestor shrines and seem to have been the ghosts of the recently dead, whose physical presence continued to be felt by loved ones.” (*The Temples of Ancient Egypt*, 1997.)

The word *akh* (𓂏𓏏) meant “effective” and “beneficial”. In a funerary context, a son, for example, could be *akh*-effective to his deceased father by providing him with a well-equipped burial and providing him with the correct burial rites. In return, the father would (hopefully) be *akh*-effective by using his newly-acquired powers to occasionally intercede in earthly affairs for his son’s benefit.



“Whoever knows this mysterious image will be a well-provided Akh-spirit



Always will he leave and enter again the Netherworld...”

From the *Amduat*—the New Kingdom text which followed the sun’s nocturnal journey through the netherworld, seeking resurrection via a mystical union with the mummified body of Osiris. Knowledge of each “mysterious image” of the netherworld was vital to make it through and achieve rebirth as a transfigured *akh*.

However, the transformation into an *akh* was not automatic; it was a state for which one had to qualify. The dead could only become “transfigured” and “effective” after proper mummification had taken place, the correct rituals had been performed, and the deceased had been vindicated before Osiris at the Weighing of the Heart ceremony.

To represent the *akh*, the Egyptians used the crested ibis (some texts refer to it as the northern bald ibis). So what might have prompted them to assign a powerful concept like the *akh* to such a regular-looking bird?


It may have had a lot to do with where the birds once nested. Unlike the sacred ibis (which represented the god Thoth), the crested ibis


prefers arid areas with sparse vegetation where it hunts for worms, lizards and insects. They roosted in colonies on the cliffs to the east and west of the Nile, which suggested a link to the horizon. The Egyptians called these regions the *akhet* (𓂏𓏏𓏏) —the thresholds between this world and the next. In the east, it was a place of rebirth. The fact that the crested ibis was also migratory suggested messengers from another world.





© JAAP JAN HEMMES

The vaulted ceiling of TT 219, the Tomb of Nebenmaat  at Deir el-Medina. Nebenmaat was a temple official during the first half of the 19th-Dynasty reign of Ramesses II. This tomb is one of a handful in Thebes whose scenes were painted with relatively few colours

(but to striking effect). The decoration is painted in yellow, red and black on a white background. Part of the text along the centre reads, , "He gives veneration to the akhs in the netherworld, peaceful are their bas in the west."





METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART. ROGERS FUND, 1923. ACC. NO. 23.2.7.

Ostriches were frequent subjects in Predynastic art, decorating clay jars and also hair combs made from ivory and bone.

This bone example, thought to be from Upper Egypt, may have been part of the funeral equipment of a member of an elite family.

In *The Scepter of Egypt: Part I (1946)*, American Egyptologist, William C. Hayes, wrote that “in the simple carvings and drawings of birds and beasts preserved to us from this era the salient features of each species are accented in such lively and accurate fashion that there is never any doubt as to what animal or bird is intended.”

Although the ostrich became extinct in Egypt in the mid-19th century, they were once abundant—particularly during the cultural period known as Naqada I (around 4000 B.C.). This was over a thousand years before Egypt’s first pyramids were built, and a time when Egypt’s western and eastern deserts were instead vast savannahs, teeming with game animals.

The grasslands also attracted people who herded and hunted them, and the cliffs of the Eastern Desert are peppered with Predynastic images of ostriches.

One scene also features the simple carved silhouettes of two men, each wearing tall twin plumes that tower above their heads. It is likely the men were hoping to gain the attributes of the animal that was formerly attached to the plumes. Egyptologist Toby Wilkinson explains that “in later Egyptian art, when worn by such gods as Amun-Ra, these plumes are clearly identifiable as ostrich feathers.” (*Genesis of the Pharaohs*, 2003.)

## THE OSTRICH

**T**HE OSTRICH IS A UNIQUE and memorable bird. Standing up to 2.75 m tall, with a long neck and legs, it has excellent stamina and can run at 50 kph, with short sprints of up to 70 kph. It also has a lethal kick aided by 10 cm long claws. Unlike other birds, ostrich plumage is soft and not waterproof. Although flightless, it may surprise some that the ostrich has rather large wings, with a span of over two metres. The birds use their wings for balance when running, for defensive or mating displays, as well as providing

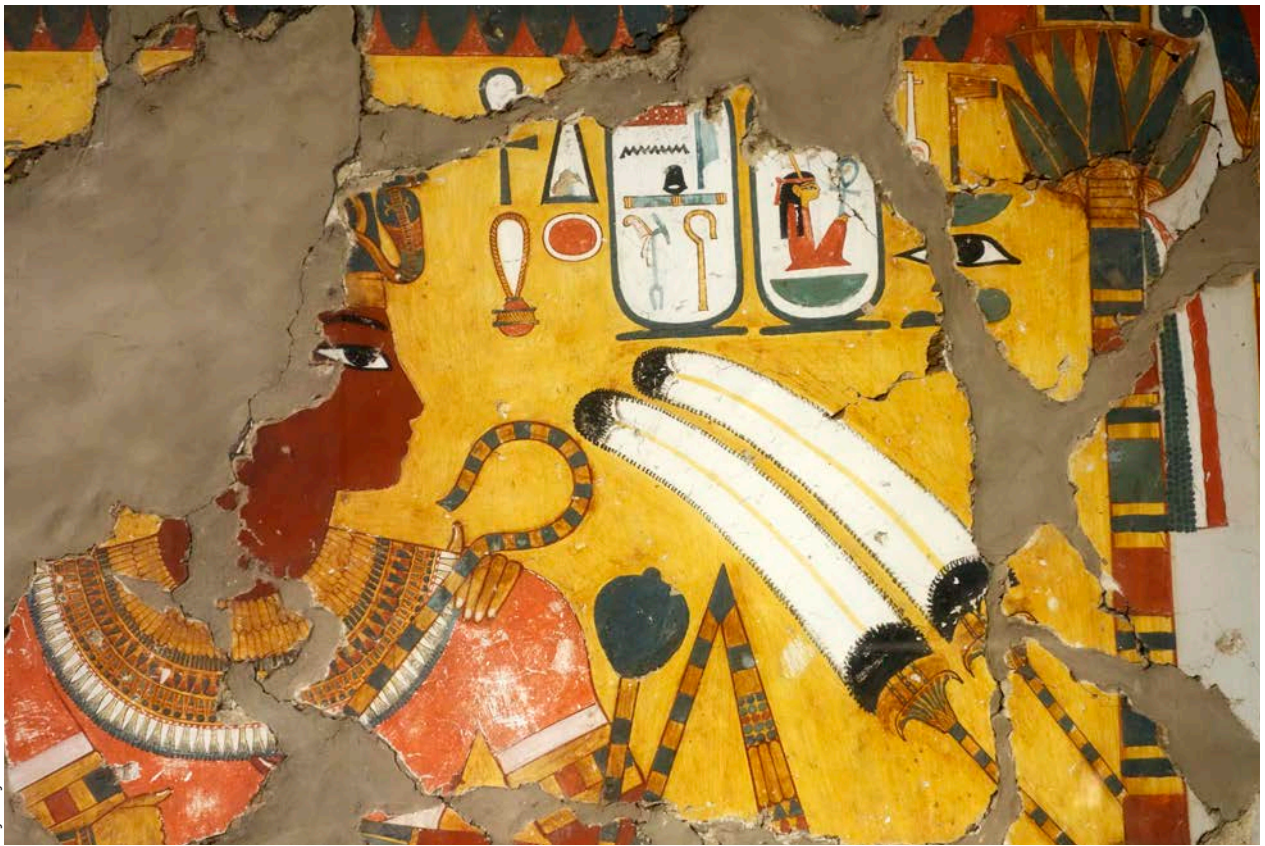


“His (King Ahmose’s) rays are on faces like Atum in the east of the sky



when the ostrich dances in the valleys...”

(Karnak Stela of Ahmose, Egyptian Museum, Cairo)  
Ostriches seen running around at dawn were thought to be joyously celebrating the triumphant rebirth of the sun.



Maat could be embodied as an ostrich feather fan, held before the face of the king, sitting resplendently with his regalia in a kiosk.

The above scene, featuring Amenhotep III wearing the blue khepresh crown (𓄎) comes from TT 226, thought to be the 18th-Dynasty Theban tomb of Heqareshu (𓂏𓂏𓂏),

who was "Overseer of the Royal Nurses". Two fan-bearers (out of frame) wave ostrich feather fans, wafting cool air past the nose of the king, and bestowing him with maat.

When discovered in 1913, TT 226 was in bad shape. This scene fragment was found lying (thankfully) face-down on the floor. It is now in Luxor Museum (Acc. No. J 134).

welcome shade for chicks.

Images of ostriches are commonly picked onto the rocks in the desolate valleys of Egypt's Eastern Desert, stretching between the Nile Valley and the Red Sea. Six thousand years ago, this was an open savannah and supported a wide variety of animals, including the ostrich, which fed on vegetation, insects and other small creatures.

In terms of potential symbolism, a number of features of the ostrich stand out: its size, powerful legs and stamina, as well as its lack of flight and soft plumage. We do not know what the ostrich symbolised in Predynastic Egypt, but as Egypt moved into recorded history, only one part of the ostrich was regarded as particularly special: its feathers.

Ostrich feathers are those used most frequently in ancient Egypt's iconography. Ostrich feathers adorn the crowns of gods such as Amun (see caption on page 36, opposite) and Shu, and were used in ceremonial fans. Shu was the son of the creator god Atum, and became the god of "luminous air, light-filled living space." (Jan Assmann, *Egyptian Solar Religion*.) Shu's name, 𓂏𓂏𓂏, was written with the ostrich feather hieroglyph, which may seem an odd choice, given it comes from a bird that can't fly. Thierry

Benderitter of *Osiris.net* suggests it may be because "the slightest movement or breath of wind will animate it." The ostrich's soft, wispy feathers would have made a pleasing metaphor for the associated concepts of emptiness, air and sunlight.

Ostrich feathers are probably best known for their association with *maat*. This was a wide-ranging concept that covered justice, morality and cosmic order, and applied in the divine and natural world as well as in human society. For the king, the preservation of *maat* ensured that the sun sailed across the sky every day and was reborn at sunrise, renewing the whole of creation.

*Maat* was embodied in the goddess of the same name, who wore an ostrich feather tucked inside a headband. So why use an ostrich feather for *maat*? John Darnell, Professor of Archaeology at Yale University, refers back to the word *shu* meaning "luminous

space". He told *NILE Magazine* that *maat's* feather may similarly have a solar connection, "as the sun is essentially the prime arbiter of cosmic order and equilibrium." Benderitter also suggests that the ostrich feather is "the only bird feather that is of equal width on both sides of its central axis, suggesting equity."

𓂏𓂏𓂏 𓂏𓂏𓂏 𓂏𓂏𓂏 𓂏𓂏𓂏 𓂏𓂏𓂏 𓂏𓂏𓂏  
 "The mountains of Manu receive you in peace

𓂏𓂏𓂏 𓂏𓂏𓂏 𓂏𓂏𓂏 𓂏𓂏𓂏 𓂏𓂏𓂏 𓂏𓂏𓂏 𓂏𓂏𓂏 𓂏𓂏𓂏  
 (and) *Maat* embraces you in all seasons. . . ."  
 (Papyrus of Ani, British Museum.)

The "mountains of Manu" were the mountains of the western horizon, and the junction between the earthly realm and the netherworld.






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TT 255 is the Tomb of Roy , who was a Royal Scribe during Horemheb's reign in the late 18th Dynasty. Pictured inside are Amenemipet and his wife Muty (whose

relationship to Roy is unknown) being welcomed into the afterlife by Maat (above). Maat's hair is dark blue to imitate the lapis-lazuli of which the hair of gods is made.

(OPPOSITE) For the pharaohs, this was their primary role: to deliver and maintain order in the world. Offering maat to a deity expressed the king's conviction to uphold the principles of cosmic order. Scenes featuring a non-royal person presenting maat to a god or goddess are rare.


One such example is in the Theban tomb of Irynefer (TT 290). Here the deceased is shown kneeling before an offering table which supports a figure of maat clutching an ankh. Irynefer offers the image of maat to Ptah (out of frame), the preeminent god of Memphis.

In theory at least, truth, justice and order governed the lives of everyone from king to peasant. For those who escaped justice in this life, there was still the Judgement Hall in the afterlife where the deceased's heart was weighed against Maat's feather of truth. The ostrich feather alone could represent both the goddess and the concept of *maat*.


Perhaps the size and appearance may have been the biggest factors for the use of the ostrich feather for *maat*. One could argue that using the heaviest feather to be found would be a distinct advantage when it came to improving your chances in the afterlife!



LESLEY JACKSON writes about Egyptian deities and is the author of *Thoth: The History of the Ancient Egyptian God of Wisdom*, *Hathor: A Reintroduction to an Ancient Egyptian Goddess* and *Isis: The Eternal Goddess of Egypt and Rome*.




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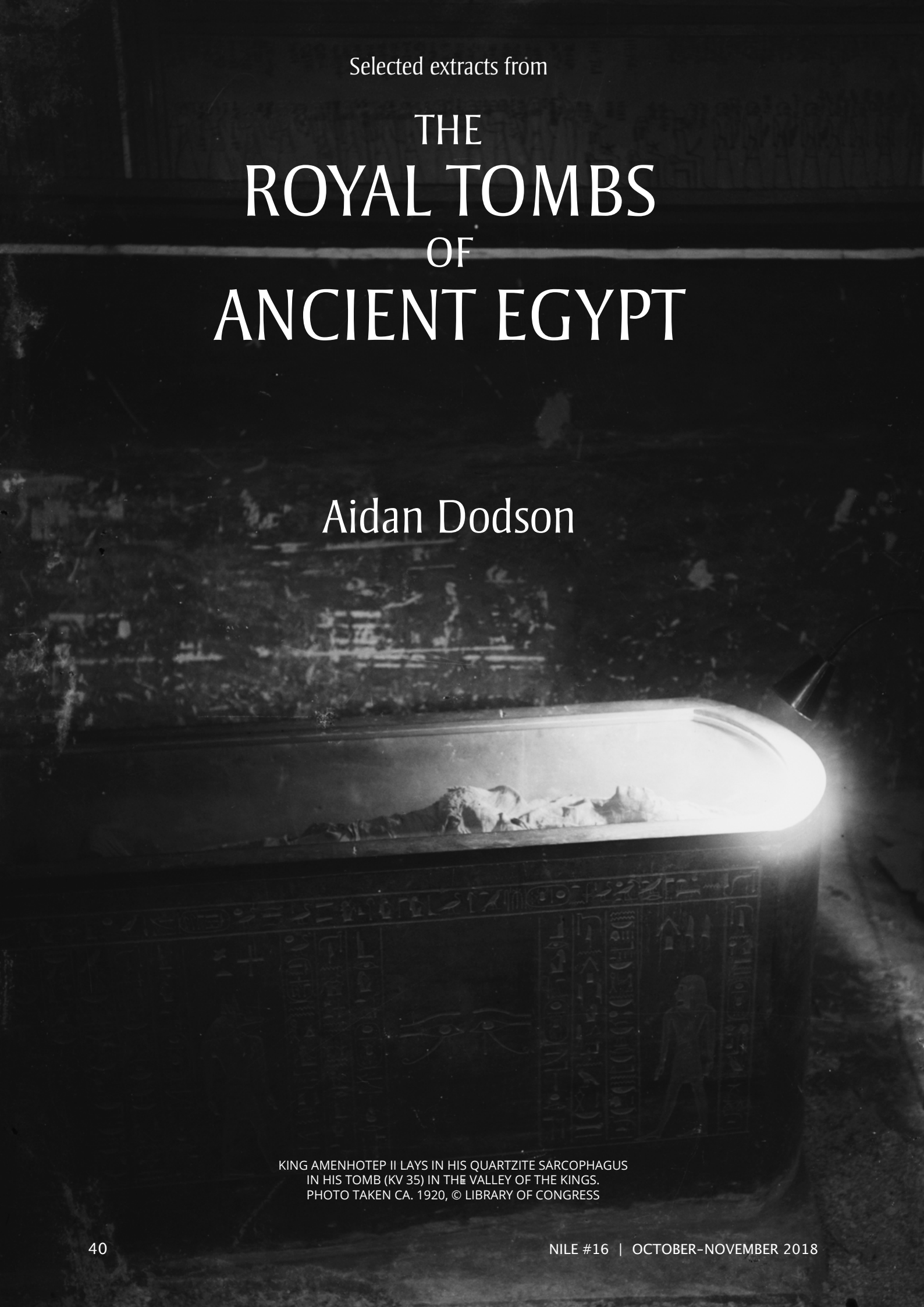
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Selected extracts from

# THE ROYAL TOMBS OF ANCIENT EGYPT

Aidan Dodson



KING AMENHOTEP II LAYS IN HIS QUARTZITE SARCOPHAGUS  
IN HIS TOMB (KV 35) IN THE VALLEY OF THE KINGS.  
PHOTO TAKEN CA. 1920, © LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



# Part 5: The 18th Dynasty

In this final abridged instalment of Aidan Dodson's *The Royal Tombs of Ancient Egypt*, the New Kingdom pharaohs embrace Senwosret III's innovation, separate their tombs and temples, and head underground.



© JAKUB KYNCL

*Horemheb is greeted by Anubis in a scene from his tomb, KV 57, in the Valley of the Kings. Time-consuming painted raised reliefs like this were a recent development in royal*

*tombs, and may have contributed to the king being interred in an unfinished, but ritually functioning tomb. Read more about the 18th Dynasty's last kingly tomb from page 56.*

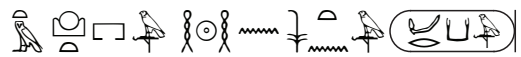
## AHMOSE I

The matter of the burial place of the founder of the New Kingdom, Ahmose I, has long been the subject of debate. Given the interment of his immediate predecessors and successors at Thebes and the discovery of his mummy in Thebes, the general assumption has been that his own original burial had been in the Theban necropolis, perhaps in the ancestral cemetery of Dra Abu'l-Naga. However, no unequivocal original tomb of his has been identified at Thebes, while at Abydos the king constructed an extensive funerary complex, spread out along a 1.4 km axis across the desert (see below).

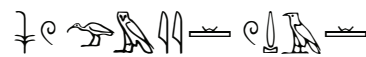
The whole complex was long dismissed as a cenotaph, but in view of the lack of any known funerary monuments at Thebes, it is possible that Ahmose had been initially interred at Abydos but been re-buried at Thebes a few years later—perhaps in the tomb of his successor, Amenhotep I. Ultimately, Ahmose I's mummy and coffin were found in TT 320 [the "Royal Cache"] at Deir el-Bahari.

## AMENHOTEP I

The identity of the burial place of Amenhotep I also presents problems, in spite of being mentioned in Papyrus Abbott. It appears at the head of a list of tombs being inspected by officials for signs of violation by thieves, but it is unclear what—if anything—this implies about its position. The relative prominence of the king *vis à vis* the other tomb-owners involved (Montjuhotep II excepted) may have led to Amenhotep's tomb being given special attention and visited out of strict topographical order.

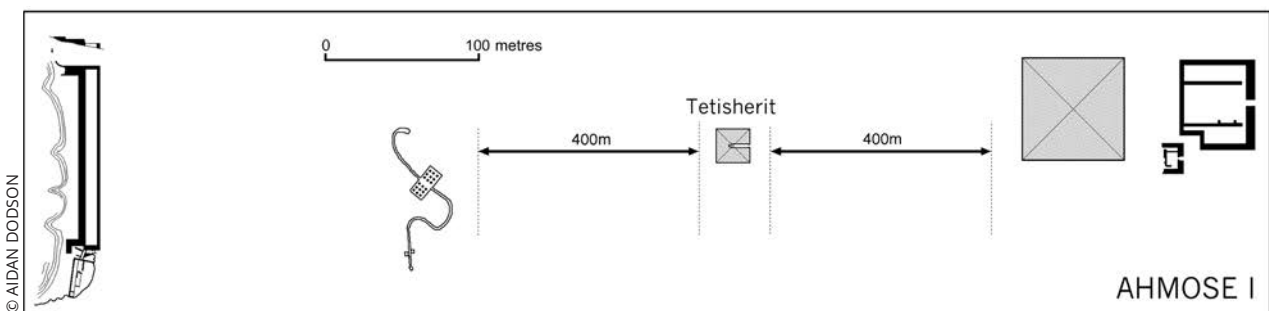


"The eternal horizon of Djeserkare (Amenhotep I)..."



"It was found intact..."

(Papyrus Abbott, 20th Dynasty, reign of Ramesses IX. British Museum, Acc. No. 10221.)

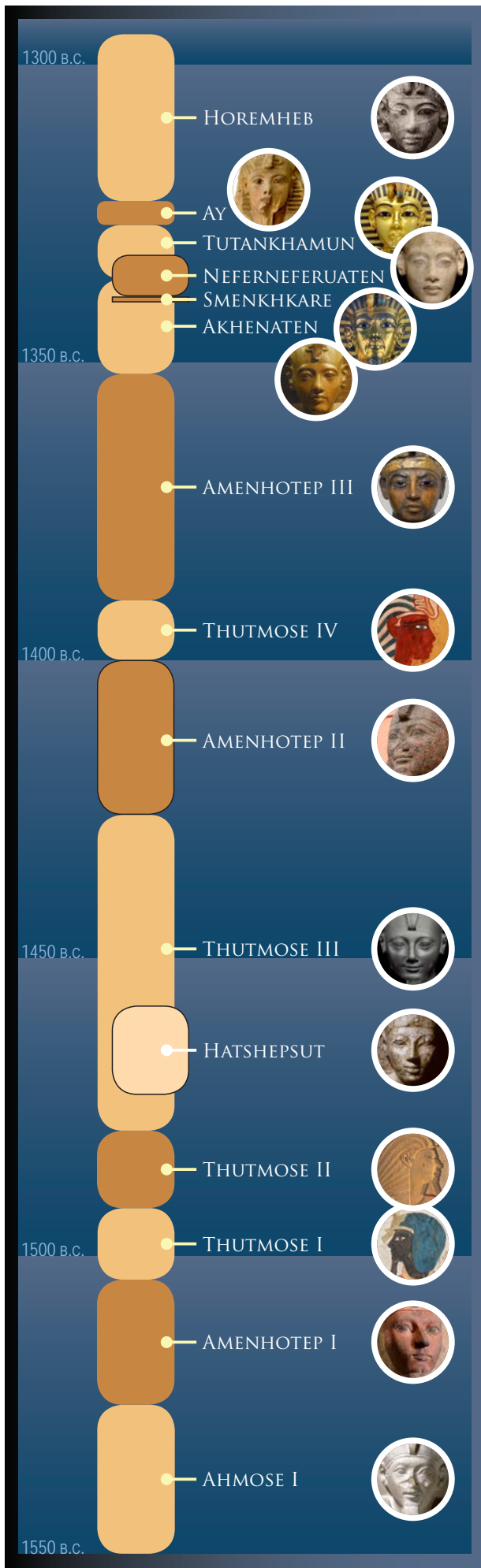


*Ahmose I's drawn-out funerary complex at Abydos. First, a rather steep-sided pyramid stands near the cultivation; its angle seems to have been around 63°. A smaller chapel lay just to the north, apparently dedicated to the king's wife, Ahmes-Nefertiry. At the opposite end of its axis was another temple, rising in terraces against the cliff face.*

*In the expanse of desert between the pyramid and temple, Ahmose constructed two monuments. The first was a pyrami-*

*dal brick chapel dedicated to his grandmother, Tetisherit. The second was a subterranean tomb with a twisting passageway that opened into a columned hall. Below the hall, a further passage, seemingly unfinished, led deeper into the matrix. Little was found in the tomb, only a few bricks, stamped with Ahmose's prenomen, Nebpehtyre (𓏏𓏏𓏏) ("The Lord of Strength is Re") and a number of fragments of gold leaf, all in the debris of the pillared hall.*

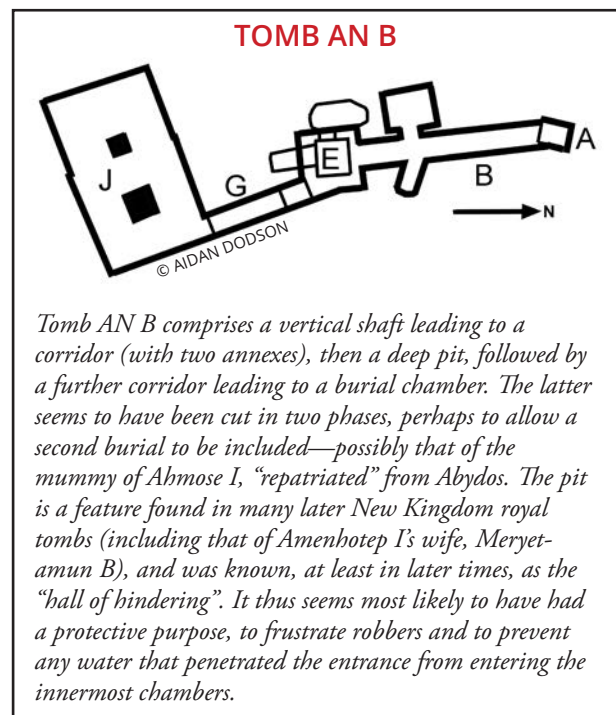




Papyrus Abbott states that the tomb lay 120 cubits below some elevated element (the exact translation of which remains moot) and north of the “House of Amenhotep of the Garden”. Unfortunately there is no clarity on the location of the latter, and it has been variously identified with a number of buildings. Candidate tombs to the north of one or more of these loci have included: KV 39, a rock-cut tomb above the southern end of the Valley of the Kings; a putative yet-undiscovered tomb in the cliff above the temples at Deir el-Bahari; a tomb in the wadis behind Dra Abu’l-Naga (AN B, see opposite); and a rock-cut tomb-chapel high up at Dra Abu’l-Naga (K93.11, also opposite). Both the latter candidates lie close to the north-south axis of a temple constructed in the names of Amenhotep I and his mother Ahmes-Nefertiry in front of the hill, apparently originally built for the king’s *heb-sed*.

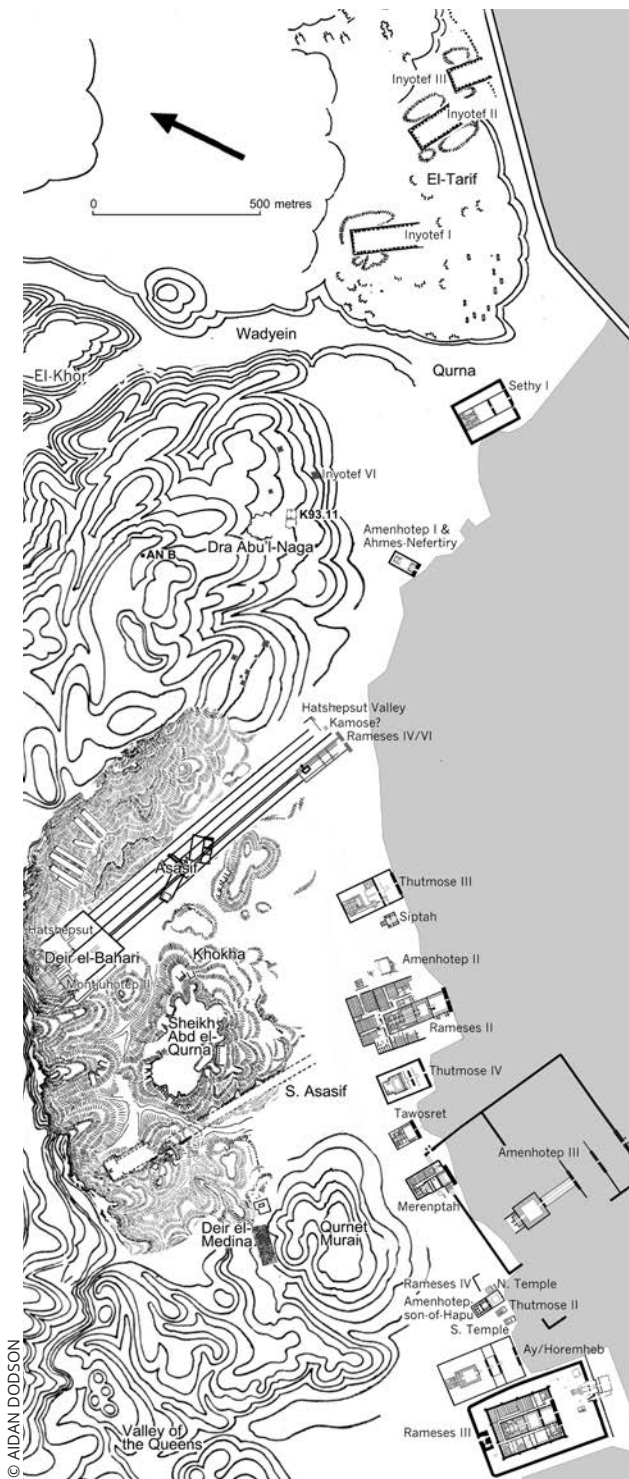
However, while probably originally constructed early in the 18th Dynasty, both K93.11 and the adjoining K93.12 were extensively modified by the high priests of Amun Ramesesnakht and Amenhotep G during the later 20th Dynasty. This is precisely the period during which the tomb of Amenhotep I was reported by Papyrus Abbott as being “intact” in Year 16 of Ramesses IX, making it seemingly impossible to identify K93.11 with a tomb in the process of being transformed into a private sepulchre.

AN B contained many items bearing the names of Amenhotep I, Ahmes-Nefertiry and also of Ahmose I. Although originally argued to be that of Amenhotep I, it was subsequently generally regarded as actually that of Ahmes-Nefertiry, but since it seems likely that the latter’s tomb was elsewhere, its ownership by Amenhotep I seems most likely.



*(LEFT) Egypt’s 18th Dynasty: fourteen kings ruling for almost 500 years. Even when the royal palace moved to Memphis during the reign of Thutmose I, the 18th-Dynasty pharaohs (as well as those of the 19th and most of the 20th) returned to Thebes to spend eternity.*





© AIDAN DODSON

(ABOVE) Western Thebes, showing the high-water mark of the Nile during the annual inundation.

As we have seen (diagram on page 41), the substructure of Ahmose I's Abydos monument was not actually below any part of the public complex, although aligned with it. In a similar fashion, the tomb of Amenhotep I (if correctly identified as tomb AN B, above) was a considerable distance from both of the West Bank temples associated with him—a kilometre from one in front of Dra Abu'l-Naga and a little more from one at Deir el-Bahari (see plan on page 47).

The latter Deir el-Bahari structure was extant for only a few decades until it was demolished during the extension of Hatshepsut's memorial temple. It would appear that Hatshepsut's temple was originally designed to leave the brick structure in place, Amenhotep's temple being removed only when a final extension was decided upon.

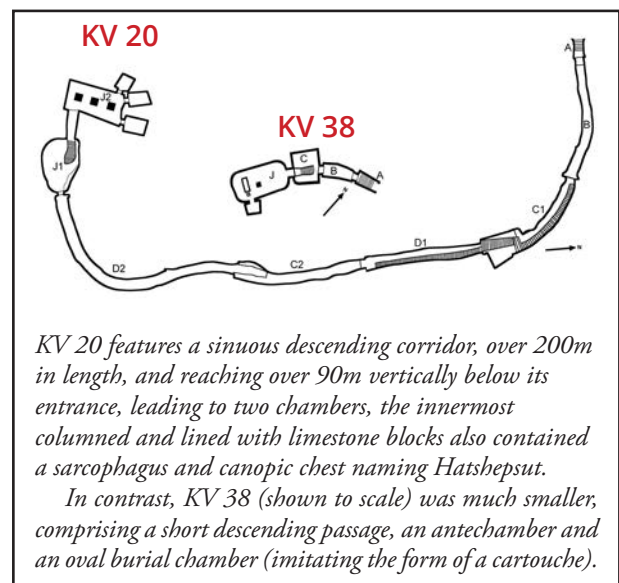
Wherever his tomb actually lay, Amenhotep I's mummy had been removed by late Ramesside times and was eventually reburied in TT 320.

Amenhotep I's separation of superstructure from substructure followed a practice apparently established during the 17th Dynasty, when Inyotef V situated his steep-sided pyramid on the lower slopes of the Dra Abu'l-Naga hill, while his unconnected burial chamber was located further up the same hill. Ahmose I had later followed this arrangement at Abydos.

## THUTMOSE I

It was the 18th Dynasty's third ruler, Thutmose I, who institutionalised the split between the public and hidden elements of the king's funerary complex. From his rule onwards, the substructures of kings' tombs began to be placed in a complex of wadis directly behind the curtain of cliffs separating the low desert from the high desert at Thebes-West. Now known as the Valley of the Kings, this housed all but a handful of the burial chambers of New Kingdom monarchs, as well as those of some members of the royal family and senior officials.

While it is generally agreed that the first king interred there was Thutmose I, debate continues as to the identity of that tomb. The main candidates have been KV 38, in which a sarcophagus and canopic chest manufactured for him by his grandson Thutmose III, were found, and KV 20, in whose burial chamber a sarcophagus modified for him by his daughter Hatshepsut was discovered.



KV 20 features a sinuous descending corridor, over 200m in length, and reaching over 90m vertically below its entrance, leading to two chambers, the innermost columned and lined with limestone blocks also contained a sarcophagus and canopic chest naming Hatshepsut.

In contrast, KV 38 (shown to scale) was much smaller, comprising a short descending passage, an antechamber and an oval burial chamber (imitating the form of a cartouche).

For many years KV 20 was regarded as purely Hatshepsut's, with Thutmose I added secondarily, the female king having removed him thither from KV 38. However, it has also been argued that only the innermost chamber was the work of Hatshepsut, the remaining parts of the tomb having already been constructed for Thutmose I or for Thutmose II. If the former, KV 38 would have been the work of Thutmose III, who was certainly the author of the sarcophagus found within. The body of Thutmose I would have been first interred in the outer chamber of KV 20, presumably in a wooden sarcophagus, given the lack of any traces of a





FRANCIS DZIKOWSKI, © AND COURTESY THEBAN MAPPING PROJECT

Although KV 42 contained a sarcophagus of royal dimensions, a kheker-ornament dado and yellow-starred blue ceiling, the tomb was unfinished, with no signs of a primary burial and no inscriptions found. Outside were found foundation deposits, naming Meryetre, a wife of Thutmose III, and thus

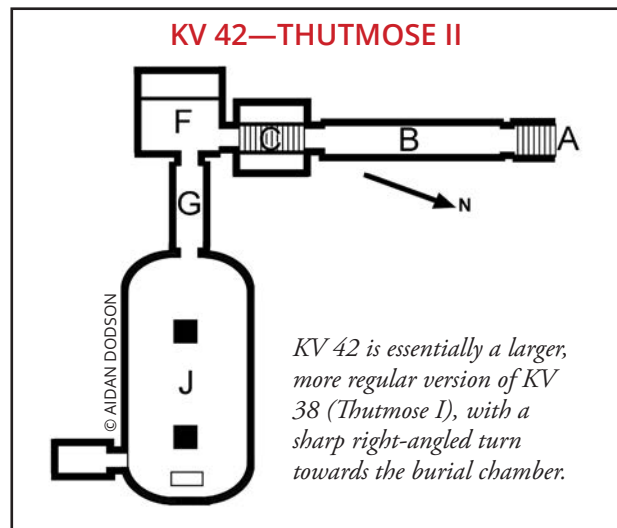
KV 42 has been proposed as having been founded for her—although it is perfectly possible that the deposits may represent a secondary appropriation of an unused tomb for the queen, but apparently not used for her burial, as the sarcophagus shows no signs of having been closed.

stone example. Then, the tomb will have been taken over by Hatshepsut (adding foundation deposits outside) and extended, the new burial chamber housing both monarchs. Subsequently, Thutmose III will have removed Thutmose I to a new tomb, equipped with a stone sarcophagus and canopic chest.

On the alternative scenario that KV 38 was cut from the outset for Thutmose I, he will have been originally interred there, removed by Hatshepsut, and returned by Thutmose III, at which point he provided the new items of stone furniture. Either way, the king's mummy appears to have been destroyed by the early 21st Dynasty, when his outermost coffin was usurped by Panedjem I (see page 19).

## THUTMOSE II

The question of the tomb of Thutmose II has long been problematic since, unlike the case of his father, no known tomb contains material bearing his name. The most oft-cited candidate has been KV 42 (above and right) in the Valley of the Kings. The walls of KV 42's burial chamber had been plastered and given a dado of *kheker*-motifs, clearly with the intention of adding a hand-drawn copy of the Book of *Amduat*, found in a number of later royal tombs. The tomb also contained an unfinished quartzite sarcophagus of a size and design consistent with it being the earliest of the sequence of such containers known from kings' tombs of the 18th Dynasty.



As already noted, another option could be that KV 20 was founded for Thutmose II, which might be further supported by the fact that the final burial chamber has three annexes—potentially one for each king buried there. However, one might, in this case, have expected a stone sarcophagus to have been provided by either Hatshepsut or Thutmose III, unless this is still concealed in an as-yet-undiscovered “final” tomb of Thutmose II (which must, however, have been plundered, given the presence of his mummy in TT 320). The question of where Thutmose II was interred remains for the time being a mystery.



## HATSHEPSUT

Thutmose II left behind a young son, Thutmose III, for whom the dowager Hatshepsut acted as regent for some seven years. She was, however, later crowned as Thutmose III's co-regent, and prepared a funerary complex suited to a fully-fledged king. As a female king, Hatshepsut certainly intended to be buried in KV 20, whether by usurpation or original commission. It seems in any case that the inner burial chamber was her work, equipped with storerooms and three columns. In view of the extremely poor rock from which the tomb was cut—a key reason for its irregular form—any attempt to simply plaster the walls to receive decoration was impossible. Therefore, limestone lining blocks were installed, upon which were delineated in black and red a cursive version of the Book of *Amduat* (“What is in the Underworld”), the earliest of a series of texts that describe and illustrate the sun-god's passage through the twelve hours of the night, from ‘death’ and sunset to rebirth at dawn.

It would be supplemented, and sometimes replaced, by a series of further “books” from the end of the 18th Dynasty onwards, which followed it in dealing with aspects of the sun-god's nocturnal journey through the underworld. Throughout the New Kingdom these books were used only in royal tombs—with the anomalous exception of one of the very early examples, in the burial chamber of tomb of the vizier User, a contemporary of Thutmose III (TT 61), where one also finds parts of the Litany of Re, a regular feature of royal tombs, starting with that of Thutmose III. The version of the *Amduat* found in KV 20 is fragmentary but the intact decoration of the tomb of Thutmose III shows that its execution will have resembled a great papyrus, unrolled against the walls of the burial chamber.

At her accession, Hatshepsut had replaced the sarcophagus that had been made for her as regent and already placed in her tomb in the Wadi Siqqat Taqa el-Zeide (see caption, right), with a larger, more elaborately decorated, one. This was subsequently re-worked for Thutmose I, and replaced by an even larger piece, this time with the plan of a cartouche. This form was to be almost universal for kingly sarcophagi for the rest of the New Kingdom. When placed in the burial chamber, the sarcophagus head, most unusually, faced south, the reverse of normal practice. However, the canopic chest lay in the traditional orientation of east of the south end of the coffer, even though this meant that it lay opposite the head of the mummy, rather than its feet, as was usual practice.

The associated offering place of Hatshepsut was in the form of a terraced temple, built against the great bay of Deir el-Bahari (page 46), directly north of the 11th Dynasty temple of Montjuhotep II. Its construction (possibly actually begun under Thutmose II—or perhaps even by Thutmose I, given the lack of any known memorial temple for him) led to the destruction of the brick chapel of Amenhotep I (see page 47).

KV 20 lay just on the other side of the cliff from Deir el-Bahari, which may have been intentional. As the first full-scale New Kingdom royal funerary temple, it is of the greatest interest and provides a prototype for all succeeding examples, although the resemblance is superficially



© DICK SELICKS

*As Thutmose II's Great Royal Wife, Hatshepsut employed a remote southern dry valley known as Wadi Siqqat Taqa el-Zeide for the location of her tomb. It lies in a fairly dramatic location, the entrance being at the base of a cleft in the rock, some 70 m above the bed of the wadi. Inside, the tomb contained little apart from a small quartzite sarcophagus, now in Cairo's Egyptian Museum. At Hatshepsut's elevation to kingly status, the tomb was abandoned in favour of KV 20 in the Valley of the Kings.*

*Hatshepsut's cliff tomb was discovered in 1916 by a group of Theban robbers. Howard Carter, who had yet to begin digging in the Valley of the Kings, was alerted of the find, and set out to confront the thieves:*

“It was midnight when we arrived on the scene, and the guide pointed out to me the end of a rope which dangled sheer down the face of a cliff. Listening, we could hear the robbers actually at work, so I first severed their rope, thereby cutting off their means of escape, and then, making secure a good stout rope of my own, I lowered myself down the cliff. Shinning down a rope at midnight, into a nestful of industrious tomb-robbers, is a pastime which at least does not lack excitement. There were eight at work, and when I reached the bottom there was an awkward moment or two. I gave them the alternative of clearing out by means of my rope, or else of staying where they were without a rope at all, and eventually they saw reason and departed. The rest of the night I spent on the spot, and, as soon as it was light enough, climbed down into the tomb again to make a thorough investigation.”  
—The Tomb of Tut-Ankh-Amen... (London, 1923.)





© JONATHAN P. HOWARD

*For its elegance and unity with its surroundings, the building has long been recognised as a gem of Egyptian architecture.*

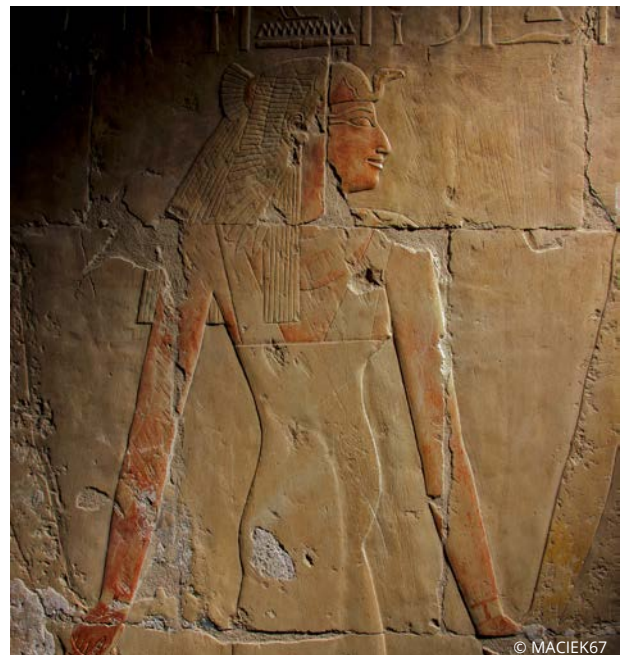
*Hatshepsut's complex began in the plain, near the edge of the cultivation, with an unfinished valley building. A causeway, lined with sphinxes, led for over a kilometre westwards to a gate in the main temple's temenos wall. Beyond this, a path flanked*

*with seven pairs of sphinxes led up to a ramp, flanked by colonnades. It seems that these were constructed after other parts of the temple, and it seems that it may originally have been intended to leave the chapel of Amenhotep I intact. However, this decision was presumably later rescinded, and the chapel demolished to make way for the northern colonnade.*

obscured by its construction in deep terraces. In this, Hatshepsut's temple followed its 11th-Dynasty neighbour, and that of Ahmose I at Abydos.

It is now clear that the meaning of the temple-element of a New Kingdom royal funerary complex was rather different from that of the mortuary temples attached to Old and Middle Kingdom pyramids. Most fundamentally, rather than being dedicated solely to the personal cult of the dead king, the primary dedicatee was a local version of the god Amun, whose sanctuary lay at the end of the main axis (facing page). An open altar to Re lay at the northern extremity of the rear of the temple (B), the chapel of the king (C)—accompanied by a smaller sanctuary of their father (D)—being relegated to the southern extremity. Accordingly, such New Kingdom temples have come to be referred to as “memorial temples” to distinguish them from the earlier “mortuary temples” (their ancient Egyptian name was “Mansions of Millions of Years”).

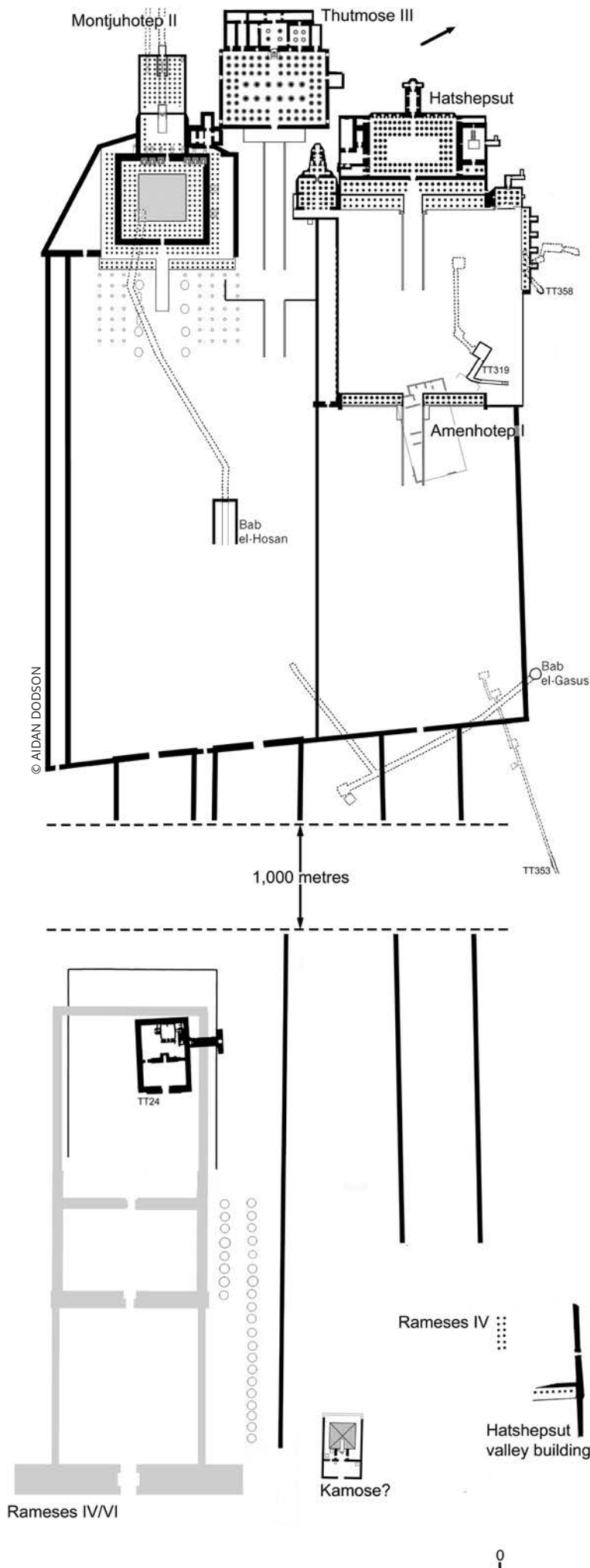
At either extremity of the second court was a chapel. That at the southern end was dedicated to the goddess Hathor (E); the northern belonged to Anubis (F), adjacent to which was a further colonnade, running along the north side of the court, equipped with four niches. This structure was never finished, and was built directly over the old tomb of Queen Meryetamun (TT 358, see map, opposite).



© MACIEK67

*Hatshepsut's temple contains a sequence showing the myth of Hatshepsut's divine paternity by the god Amun, who had taken the form of (or become incarnate in) Thutmose I in order to impregnate her mother, Ahmes B (shown pregnant, above).*





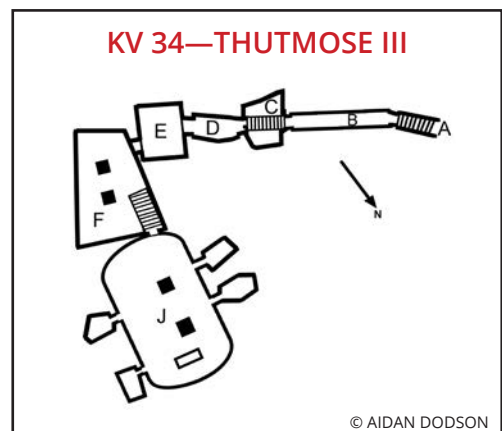
The upper terrace of the temple, fronted once more by a pair of colonnades, was occupied by a peristyle court. At the back of the court, on the main axis of the temple, was the principal sanctuary (A) of Amun of *Djeser-djeseru* (the temple's ancient Egyptian name: "Holy-of-Holies"). Originally comprised of two rooms, a third was added in Ptolemaic times, under Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II, dedicated to two deified mortals: Imhotep, architect of the Step Pyramid of Saqqara, and Amenhotep-son-of-Hapu, a celebrated official of Amenhotep III.

To the north of the peristyle court, a columned vestibule gave access to a court with an open-air altar dedicated to the sun-god in his manifestation of Horemakhet.

A doorway in the south wall of the peristyle led into a vestibule giving access to two chapels, the smaller having been dedicated to Thutmose I, the larger to Hatshepsut herself. This linking of the owner of the temple with their father is found in a number of other such structures (e.g. of Sethy I), but it is unclear whether it was an invariable feature of a memorial temple, since the memorial temples of the remaining kings of the 18th Dynasty are all in very poor condition, making assessment problematic.

### THUTMOSE III

Thutmose III's tomb (KV 34) was cut high above the floor of the Valley of the Kings in a "chimney" in the rock, apparently to encourage the obliteration of their precise position by the deposition of debris by floodwater running off the high desert and emptying into wadis such as the Valley. KV 34 had the same "bent" plan seen in a number of other contemporary royal tombs (below), starting with two sets of steps and two corridors, leading to a chamber whose floor was cut away after the funeral to form a shaft some 19 m deep (E, below):



A once-sealed doorway, painted over to match the rest of the wall, led into the antechamber (F), its roof supported by a pair of pillars. The shape of the room was rather odd,





© AIDAN DODSON

**(ABOVE)**

*Thebes-west: the greatly-eroded memorial temple of Thutmose III, constructed opposite the Sheikh Abd el-Qurna hill where many of the officials of the time were buried.*

*Unlike Hatshepsut's monument at Deir el-Bahari, Thutmose III's temple employed considerable quantities of mud-brick in its structure, supplementing the limestone and sandstone that were used primarily for decorated elements.*

*As you can see, today, the temple's mud-brick first pylon is separated from the rest of the building by the modern road.*

**(RIGHT)**

*One of the pillar-faces in the burial chamber of KV 34 was given a unique scene, of the king with three wives, Merytre-Hatshepsut, Satiah, and Nebtu, and a daughter, Nefertari. Thutmose is suckled by his mother, Iset, in the guise of a tree. This is the first and last time that members of the royal family would be included in the decoration of a royal tomb, except for the anomalous representation of Queen Tey in Ay's WV 23 (p. 56).*

*The stick figures and cursive hieroglyphs, together with those in the antechamber, appear to have been applied during the funerary ceremonies, perhaps as part of the "activation" of the magical mechanism that was the tomb.*



© FRANÇOIS OLIVIER, WWW.MERITSEGERBOOKS.COM

each wall being of a different length; it was adorned with long lists of the denizens of the Underworld, many of whom were not found outside the restricted world of the royal tombs.

A sunken stairway in the floor of the chamber led down into the burial chamber, of the oval form already noted in KV 38 and KV 42. Its walls bear the earliest intact version of the "papyrus-written" *Amduat*, seen in fragmentary form in Hatshepsut's sepulchral chamber. On five faces of the two pillars were placed an abbreviated version of another of the funerary "books", the *Litany of Re* (above).

Thutmose III's sarcophagus was a further development of those of Hatshepsut, but no canopic chest survives. It

may have been removed in the Late Period—almost a thousand years later—when the tomb was entered to allow the copying of the sarcophagus's decoration for use on that of a noble named Hapymen. The king's mummy was found in TT 320, within what had once been his outer wooden coffin, although now in very poor condition, almost the entire gilded surface having been hacked away.

**AMENHOTEP II**

The next king, Amenhotep II, placed his tomb (KV 35) at the base of the western cliffs of the Kings' Valley, once again



*Amenhotep II's burial chamber in KV 35 was the only room of the tomb to be decorated, its walls carrying the Amduat in the same cursive style as found previously. The pillars, however, were now six in number and showed the king receiving life from various deities. The floor of the chamber was apparently originally intended to be on one level, as in earlier tombs, but at a relatively late stage in construction, its south end was lowered by around 1.5m, thus forming a kind of crypt. In this was placed the king's sarcophagus, similar to that of his predecessor, but somewhat larger and less elegant.*

*The construction of the crypt may be explained by an emerging desire to surround the sarcophagus with one or more wooden shrines. Four or more were employed during the late 18th and 20th Dynasties, and the sunken floor was probably the easiest way of gaining the requisite vertical clearance.*

*The king's mummy remained in the tomb until modern times, KV 35 having been used as a cache for royal mummies removed from their own tombs during the 20th/21st Dynasty.*

*When discovered in 1898, Amenhotep II was the first king to be found in the Valley of the Kings in his own sarcophagus, albeit in a replacement cartonnage coffin.*

*The king's body was left in place in his tomb (see page 40) until 1931 when it was moved to Cairo for security. Today, Amenhotep II's mummy is on display in the Royal Mummies Gallery in Cairo's Egyptian Museum.*

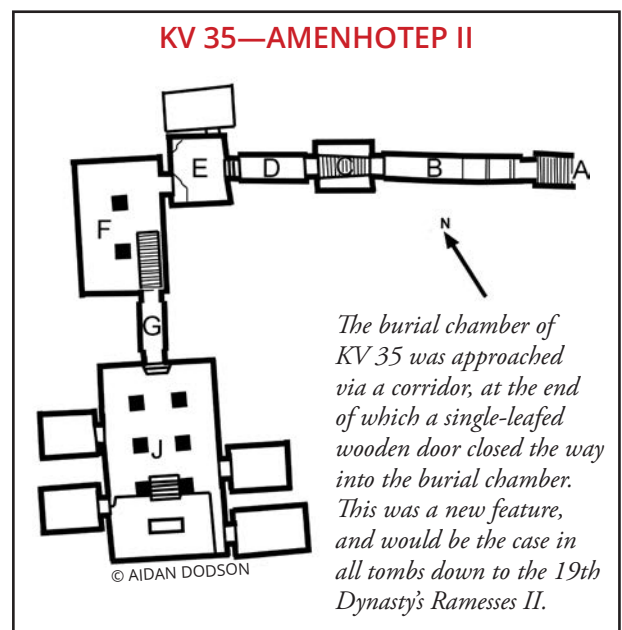


FRANCIS DZIKOWSKI, © AND COURTESY THEBAN MAPPING PROJECT

below an occasional waterfall. Its plan (right) followed the general arrangement of KV 34, but was more regular and, most importantly, abandoned the cartouche-form burial hall (J) in favour of one of rectangular plan.

Although comprehensively robbed in antiquity, large quantities of funerary equipment was found surviving when the tomb was opened. These included fragments of Amenhotep II's canopic chest, which differed completely from those of Hatshepsut and Thutmose I, which had been made from the same material as their sarcophagi. In Amenhotep's case it had been carved from a block of translucent calcite (Egyptian alabaster), and at each corner bore the raised figure of one of the protective goddesses, Isis, Nephthys, Nut and Selket. Inside, canopic jars were carved as one with the box, each stoppered with a small head of the king. This basic design was retained for royal canopics down to the middle of the 19th Dynasty.

As a further innovation, the king was equipped with multiple shabti figures, replacing the single shabti that had been used in burials prior to Amenhotep II's reign.







FRANCIS DZIKOWSKI, © AND COURTESY THEBAN MAPPING PROJECT

*The well-room (E) of KV 43, constructed for Thutmose IV, and discovered by Howard Carter in 1903:*

“Sliding down the passage over the rubbish for about 30 metres, we found ourselves over a gaping well obstructing further progress. Here we were obliged to wait until our eyes became accustomed to

the dim light of our candles.... Looking around us we saw that the upper part of the walls of this well were painted with scenes in which the cartouche of Thoutmôsis IV figured prominently. Here was, at last, final evidence of the true ownership of the tomb.”—The Tomb of Thoutmôsis IV (London, 1904).

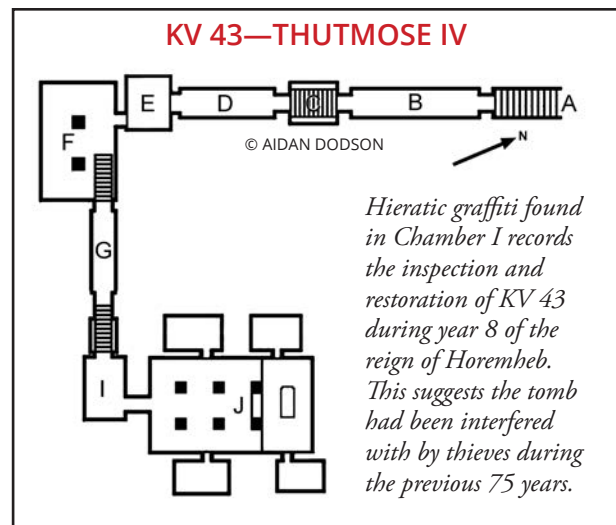
## THUTMOSE IV

Thutmose IV constructed his tomb (KV 43) in the Valley of the Kings on the opposite side of the wadi from that of his father. It is instructive to note that Amenhotep II had also selected a site a considerable distance from the tomb of his predecessor. This practice continued down to the end of the dynasty, but not beyond.

The design of the tomb represented a further development of that of Amenhotep II, most notably adding a third flight of stairs and an antechamber before the burial chamber, which is turned through a further ninety degrees. The antechamber and well-room (above) received decoration (showing the king before various deities, all for the first time in the Valley in polychrome), this was never completed, and the remainder of the tomb was never even plastered in preparation for decoration. However, the sarcophagus that lay in the burial chamber’s sunken crypt was completely carved and painted: twice the height and width of that of Thutmose III, it reflects the increasing size of royal sarcophagi from reign to reign.

The tomb was robbed on more than one occasion, which resulted in the destruction of much of the tomb’s funerary equipment and the removal of the king’s mummy, which eventually found rest in the KV 35 cache.

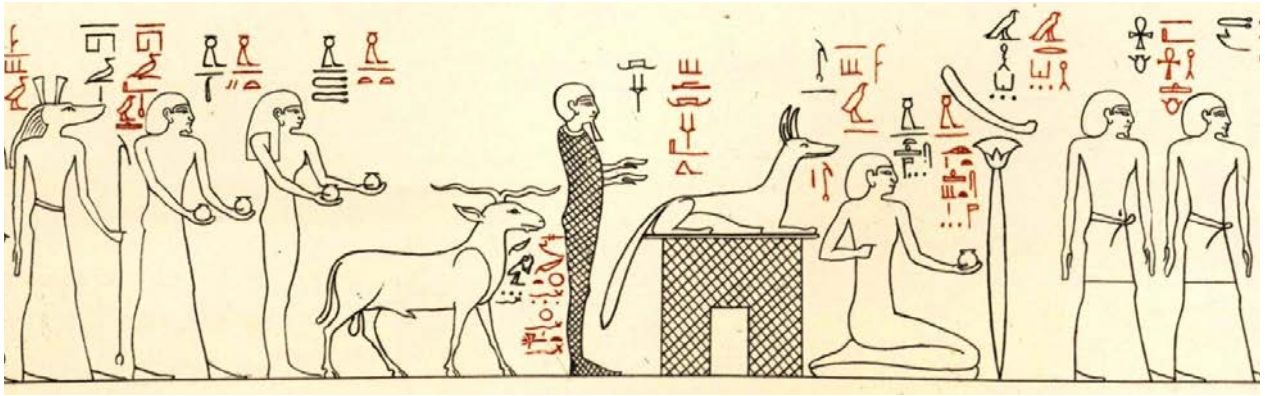
Besides KV 43, in which he was actually buried, Thutmose IV was responsible for the foundation of a second tomb in the Valley of the Kings. Foundation deposits naming him have been found outside WV 22, in a hitherto-virgin branch known as the West Valley. The reason for this is unclear; in any case the tomb was actually completed for his successor, Amenhotep III.



## AMENHOTEP III

In basic plan, WV 22 followed that of its immediate precursors, with the principal exception that, uniquely for a kingly tomb, the entrance to the burial hall (J, opposite ) was not on the main axis, but at one end of a sidewall. In addition, it had two pillared chambers opening off the crypt, each with its own annex (Jb and Jc). That at the end of the chamber seems to have been part of the original plan of the tomb, and seems likely to have been intended for the burial of Queen Tiye. The second complex (Jb), on the other hand, preserves traces that show that it was enlarged out



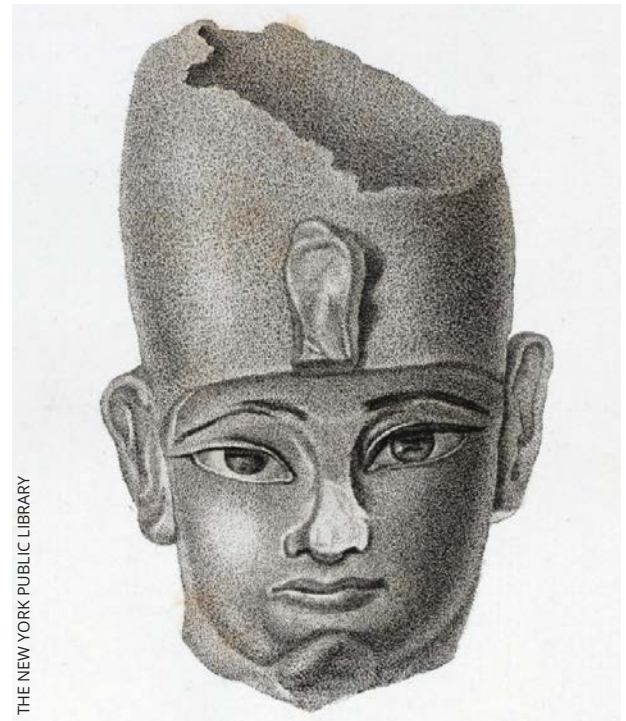
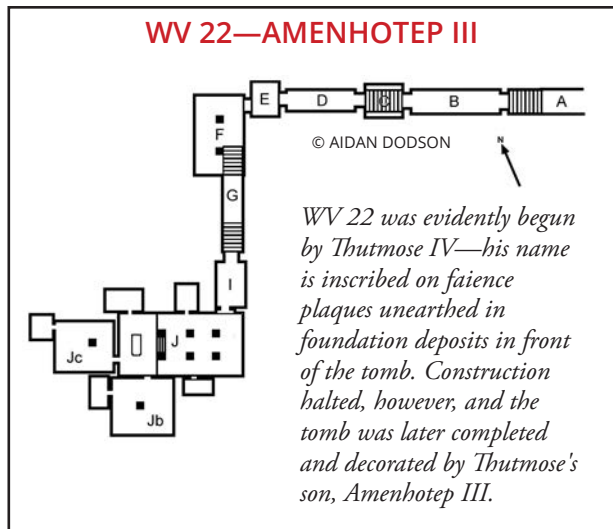


The burial chamber of Amenhotep III's tomb was decorated with the 'hand-written' version of the Amduat seen in earlier sepulchres. However, its style differed somewhat from that found in the tombs of Thutmose III and Amenhotep II, since the upper parts of most of the figures were properly drawn, and only the legs left as 'sticks'. The tomb of Amenhotep III was already open when discovered

in 1799 by the youngest members of Napoleon Bonaparte's Egyptian expedition, 21-year-old Prosper Jollois and Édouard de Villiers who was just 18. This drawing was made some 40 years later by a similarly youthful artist, 19-year-old Ernst Weidenbach on the Prussian expedition to Egypt and Nubia under Richard Lepsius.

of what had been one of the standard four store-rooms found in earlier kingly tombs. As a late addition to the tomb plan, it would seem reasonable to attribute it to Sitamun, Amenhotep III's eldest daughter, who obtained the dignity of Queen in the last decade of the king's reign.

Only the lid of the sarcophagus survives in the crypt of the burial chamber. Made of granite, it is the first use of the material for a king since the time of Amenemhat III, back at the end of the 12th Dynasty; it was once gorgeously decorated in gold foil. Of its coffer, however, no trace has



This head from a calcite shabti of Amenhotep III was found in WV 22 by French engineers Prosper Jollois and Édouard de Villiers in 1799 and subsequently published in *Description de l'Égypte*. Today it is part of the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Acc. No. 66.99.29).

ever come to light. It is most likely that it was removed for reuse during the Third Intermediate Period, when many tombs were stripped of such salvageable material.

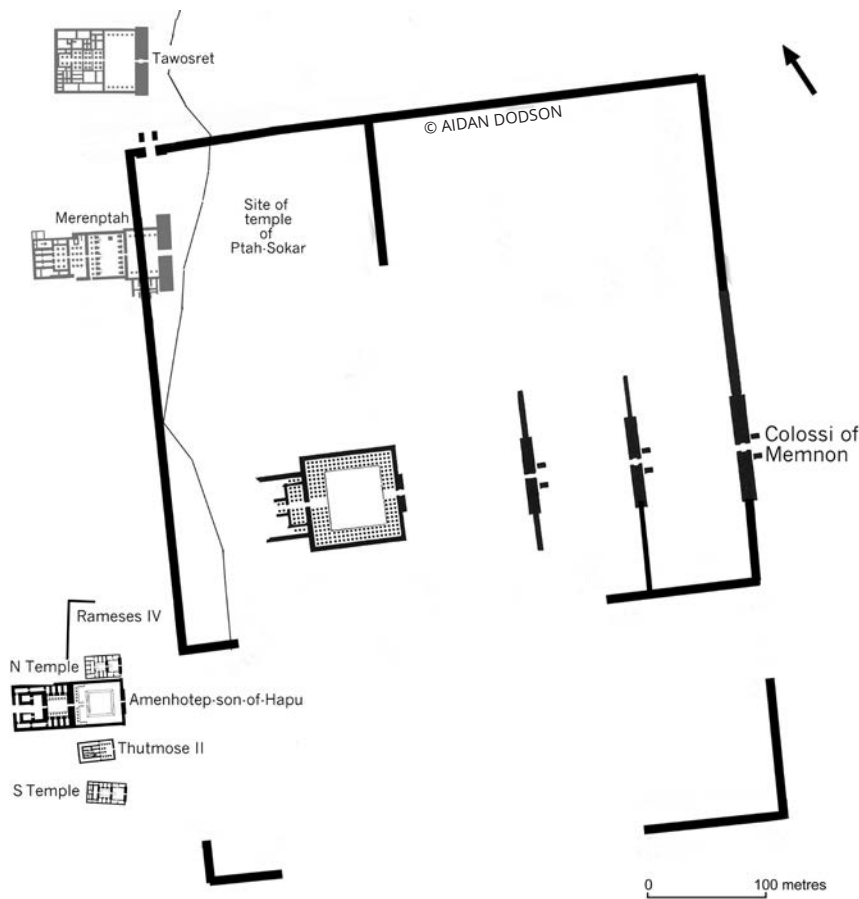
For his memorial temple (page 52) Amenhotep III selected a site south of that of his father for a structure that was in its final configuration without precedent in both size and form. It was but one element of a much larger West-Theban scheme that included his palace-complex at Malqata, two kilometers further south. The temple was rather different in conception from the memorial temples of Amenhotep III's predecessors, both in layout and in size.

The memorial temple had the unique feature for a West-

Theban temple of having the outer courtyards built largely on the floodplain (see map on page 43), in contrast to the wholly-desert locations of other temples, and must thus have been intended to flood annually.

The main (eastern) entrance to the temple was marked by a brick pylon and a pair of quartzite colossi (now known as the famed Colossi of Memnon), followed by two further brick pylons, fronted respectively by quartzite and alabaster colossi. An area apparently devoid of structures preceded a peristyle court, with two stelae flanking the entrance, and with standing colossi between the pillars of the front row, those on the north side being of quartzite





*Amenhotep III built his memorial temple on a truly monumental scale, with a series of pylon-fronted courts and an enclosure that covered some three square kilometres.*

*This area also embraced a number of subsidiary sanctuaries, including a separate temple of Ptah-Sokar-Osiris, approached from a northern gateway (guarded by colossal standing figures) and processional way.*

*As well as its funerary role, the temple fulfilled a role during the king's lifetime, as a major venue for his First Jubilee celebrations. This may explain the range of unusual sculptures included in the temple's furnishings, adding up to an unprecedented collection of images, including many statues of the goddess Sekhmet and divine images that are in some cases without direct parallel elsewhere. Given the building of the outer courtyards on the floodplain, it may have been intended that these deities were to have been perceived during the Inundation as being in the process of emerging from the primeval ocean of Nun.*



*Kom el-Hetan: the western side of the peristyle court of the memorial temple of Amenhotep III. The spaces between the columns of the front row were populated by colossal statues of*

*the king. As an indication of the monumental scale of Amenhotep III's temple, the peristyle court alone was as large as the whole of the Deir el-Bahari temple of Hatshepsut.*

and those on the south of granite, reflecting the respective geographical origins of the two stones.

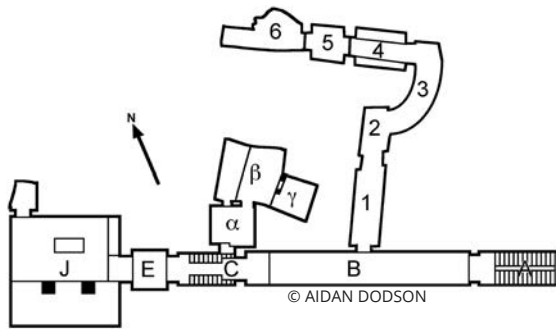
Little of the plan of the inner temple can, however, be traced, the whole temple having been severely damaged by an earthquake, probably early in the reign of the 19th-Dynasty pharaoh, Merenptah, who subsequently used it as

a quarry for his own memorial temple. This included not only blocks, but also stelae and even sculpture, sliced up to produce building material. Many other items of sculpture were re-worked from at least the reign of Ramesses II and became widely distributed around Thebes, and perhaps even further afield.



## AKHENATEN

### TA 26 - The Royal Tomb



Amenhotep III's successor, Amenhotep IV, temporarily changed the pattern of Egyptian royal burial when he transformed the cult of the solar disk Aten into that of a sole god, changed his own name to Akhenaten and moved the capital and royal cemetery to the virgin site of Tell el-Amarna (*Akhet-Aten*), in Middle Egypt.

Prior to this move, in his fifth regnal year, it is likely that a burial was contemplated in the Valley of the Kings' West Valley, and there is indeed an unfinished tomb (WV 25) that may well have been intended as his. It comprises a staircase and descending corridor, beyond which work had been abandoned. The form and dimensions of the corridor are consistent with a late 18th Dynasty date, while there is no evidence for the use of this branch of the valley before Amenhotep III or later than Ay. When discovered, they contained eight intrusive burials of the Third Intermediate Period.

Following the move to Amarna, a wadi to the east of the city became the site of a tomb for the king and his family (TA 26, above). It differed from earlier royal tombs, with corridors of much greater width and height than previously, and also making significant provision for the burial of members of the royal family in chambers and galleries opening off the main corridor.

A doorway at the back of the well-room (E) gave access to what was used as the burial chamber for not only the king, but his mother Tiye as well: fragmentary sarcophagi of both were found. In its final form, it had only two pillars, but seems to have been designed for four: two were cut away when a sarcophagus-plinth was cut from the floor. It is likely that the original plan was for a further passage to lead beyond it to a definitive burial chamber.

The main corridor of the tomb was undecorated, but the well-room had depictions (now badly damaged, like all the reliefs in the tomb) of the worship of the Aten. For the first time in a New Kingdom royal tomb, relief was employed for its scenes; previously, paint alone had been used. The burial chamber was also decorated with scenes of sun-worship and two scenes of mourning.

The burial equipment in the tomb was reduced to fragments in antiquity, but it is clear that while the same basic elements were carried over from orthodoxy, decoration differed greatly. Thus the king's sarcophagus depicted the Aten and was protected, not by the four traditional tutelary goddesses, but by his wife, Nefertiti, while his canopic chest had the early avian form of the Aten around its corners.



METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, ROGERS FUND, 1947, ACC. NO. 47.57.2

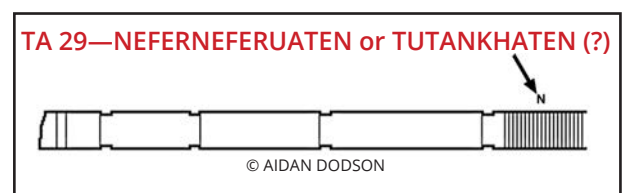
*This shabti of Akhenaten wearing a long wig is thought to have been found in the Amarna Royal Tomb (TA 26).*

*With official recognition of the Osirian afterlife temporarily suspended, none of the over 200 shabtis attributed to Akhenaten bear the traditional shabti spell from the Book of the Dead. After all, why empower one's shabti to take care of the kingly netherworld chores if there was no netherworld? Instead, the royal shabtis are inscribed with the king's names and titles.*

*So what hope was there for eternal life? Akhenaten makes it clear that at dawn, the Amarna dead rose with the newly-created Aten to live again beneath the god's rays. What happens at sunset, however, is still a mystery.*

### SMENKHKARE / NEFERNEFERUATEN / TUTANKHATEN

Two other apparently-kingly tombs (TA 27 and TA 29) were begun in the Royal Wadi, with the barely-started TA 30 possibly another. One, TA 27, comprises most of the first corridor, penetrating 13 m into the rock, but no more. In contrast, TA 29 was no less than 45m long when work was terminated part way down what would have been a stairway, following on from three full corridors.



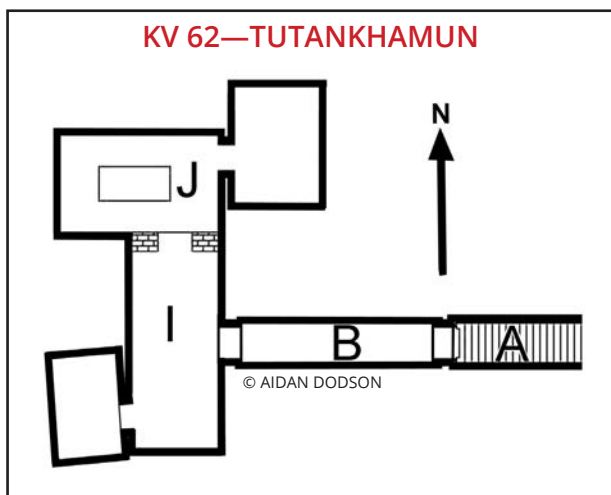


The candidates for the owners of these tombs would appear to be Akhenaten's two co-rulers, Smenkhkare and Neferneferuaten, and his successor, Tutankhaten (later -amun), all of whom were resident at Amarna at some point. However, in the absence of texts, allocation is problematic. In any case, Neferneferuaten never received a pharaonic burial, with much of her equipment being eventually reused in the burial of Tutankhamun.

## TUTANKHAMUN

This latter interment ultimately took place in a small tomb in the Valley of the Kings, KV 62, which was certainly originally intended as a non-kingly sepulchre, but was moderately enlarged to hold a king's burial.

The identity of Tutankhamun's originally-intended tomb is uncertain, but consensus tends towards WV 23, a tomb in the West Valley in which Tutankhamun's successor, Ay, was interred, close to WV 25. Although it has been speculated that Tutankhamun had originally been placed in WV 23, and moved secondarily to KV 62, it seems more likely that it was decided at the time of Tutankhamun's death that the smaller KV 62 (perhaps Ay's intended private sepulchre) should be adapted for him during the time occupied by the embalming process.



The original tomb appears to have been restricted to a descending passage and a rectangular chamber—very similar to the plan of the tomb of Amenhotep III's parents-in-law, Yuya and Tjuiu (KV 46). When converted, a sunken crypt was added to the north end of its chamber, together with two small store-rooms. Into the new burial chamber was inserted the king's fine quartzite sarcophagus; its form resembled that of Akhenaten's, but with its protective female figures on its corners representing Isis, Nephthys, Neith and Selqet, rather than the queen. The decoration of the sarcophagus had been largely recut at some stage, probably at the time of the amendment of the king's nomen from Tutankhaten to Tutankhamun, although it has also been suggested that the sarcophagus was among the items from the burial ensemble of Neferneferuaten appropriated for use in KV 62, in which case it would have been her texts that needed replacement. The quartzite sarcophagus coffer was closed by a granite lid, broken while being lowered into place; the occasion for this accident may have been the

discovery that the toes of the outermost coffin of the king were higher than the rim of the sarcophagus-coffer, and needed adzing down.

The sarcophagus was surrounded by a series of four gilded wooden shrines, which provide the earliest examples of a number of funerary "books" that came to supplement the *Amduat* during the period following the death of Akhenaten and would appear on the walls of later royal tombs. The decoration of KV 62 itself was restricted to the burial chamber and was entirely polychrome, the 'drawn' schemes of earlier times having been definitively abandoned.

In contrast with the complete versions of the *Amduat* found hitherto, only part of the first section of the work was provided, opposite the head of the sarcophagus. It would appear that, owing to the lack of space, this was intended to stand for the whole of the work, the remainder being provided magically.



*The east wall of Tutankhamun's Burial Chamber features the solar barque carrying the sun, in the form of the Khepri scarab, into a new dawn. Khepri is being worshipped by two figures of Tutankhamun, labelled "Osiris", showing that he is now one with the god of the Underworld and shares in his eternal regeneration.*

*The wall decoration also includes 12 squatting baboon deities of the first of the 12 hours of the night. Each ape is named, giving the king the power to pass one as he travels through the netherworld before being reborn at dawn.*

The opposite wall showed the royal catafalque being dragged by nobles to the tomb, a scene not normally otherwise found in a royal burial chamber (and in any case normally found in a funerary chapel, not a burial chamber). The long walls of the chamber showed the king before various deities, together with a unique scene of Tutankhamun's successor, Ay, performing the Opening of the Mouth ceremony, a tableau that seems to be an extension of the catafalque-dragging scene on the adjacent wall. While





*The Valley of the Kings with KV 62, the Tomb of Tutankhamun, on the right-hand side. Behind it is KV 9, the tomb of Ramesses V and VI, carved 180 years later. On the left, behind the low wall surrounding the entrance to KV 10 (Amenmesse, 19th Dynasty) is KV 63, discovered in 2005.*

*The latter contained a large quantity of embalming refuse, probably brought from Amarna for reburial at its abandonment, and may thus relate to the embalming of Akhenaten, Smenkhkare and Tiye—and perhaps some of Akhenaten's daughters as well.*

generic Opening of the Mouth sequences were placed in later royal tombs, this is the only case of the celebrant being named; this seems likely to be a result of the issues surrounding the succession after Tutankhamun's death, which may have resulted in Ay's making his claim clear (as Horus burying Osiris) in the ritual context of the tomb.

KV 62 was found almost intact, and thus provides an example of the sheer variety of material placed in the tomb of a king of the New Kingdom. Indeed, while many of the objects found had parallels in the debris of other tombs, the richness of some of them was significantly greater, gilding having been applied to pieces whose parallels had been merely of black-varnished wood.

A flood, which engulfed the lowest part of the Valley in which KV 62 and KV 63 were cut, and concealed these two tombs, also sealed at least one other known tomb there, KV 55. This contained a range of material, including a mutilated funerary shrine of Queen Tiye, a set of canopic jars originally made for Kiya, a wife of Akhenaten, a coffin almost certainly made for Kiya that had been reworked for a king (whose names had subsequently been cut out from its inscriptions), and a mummy within the coffin.

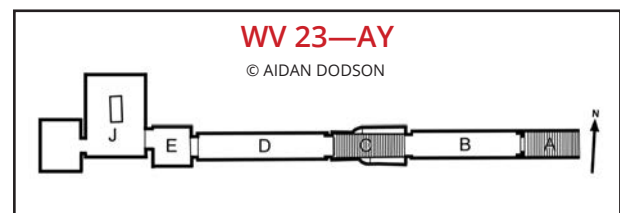
The tomb seems to have been intended to hold a number of burials removed from the Royal Wadi at Amarna when the city ceased to be a royal residence around Years 3/4 of Tutankhamun. Soon after Tutankhamun's death, it seems to have been re-entered, some burials removed and the remaining one mutilated, before being resealed and the site covered by flood debris until modern times. The identity of this remaining burial has been variously argued as being either Akhenaten or Smenkhkare, with the latter apparently the more likely.

## AY

The West-Theban memorial temple of Tutankhamun's successor, Ay, lay south of the great temple complex of Amenhotep III (see map on page 43). Equipped with original foundation deposits in Ay's name (showing that he had not usurped a building of Tutankhamun), it was to be usurped and completed by the next king, Horemheb. As laid out by Ay, the structure comprised a tripartite inner temple fronted by a colonnade. In front of this, a terrace at a lower level was closed by a pylon, with a further pylon representing the façade of the temple a little further to the east. Between the two pylons was erected a palace for occupation during festivals, a feature that would become standard for royal memorial temples.

The Ay/Horemheb temple was later demolished, with a number of blocks ending up reused on the east bank in the temple of Khonsu at Karnak during the 20th Dynasty.

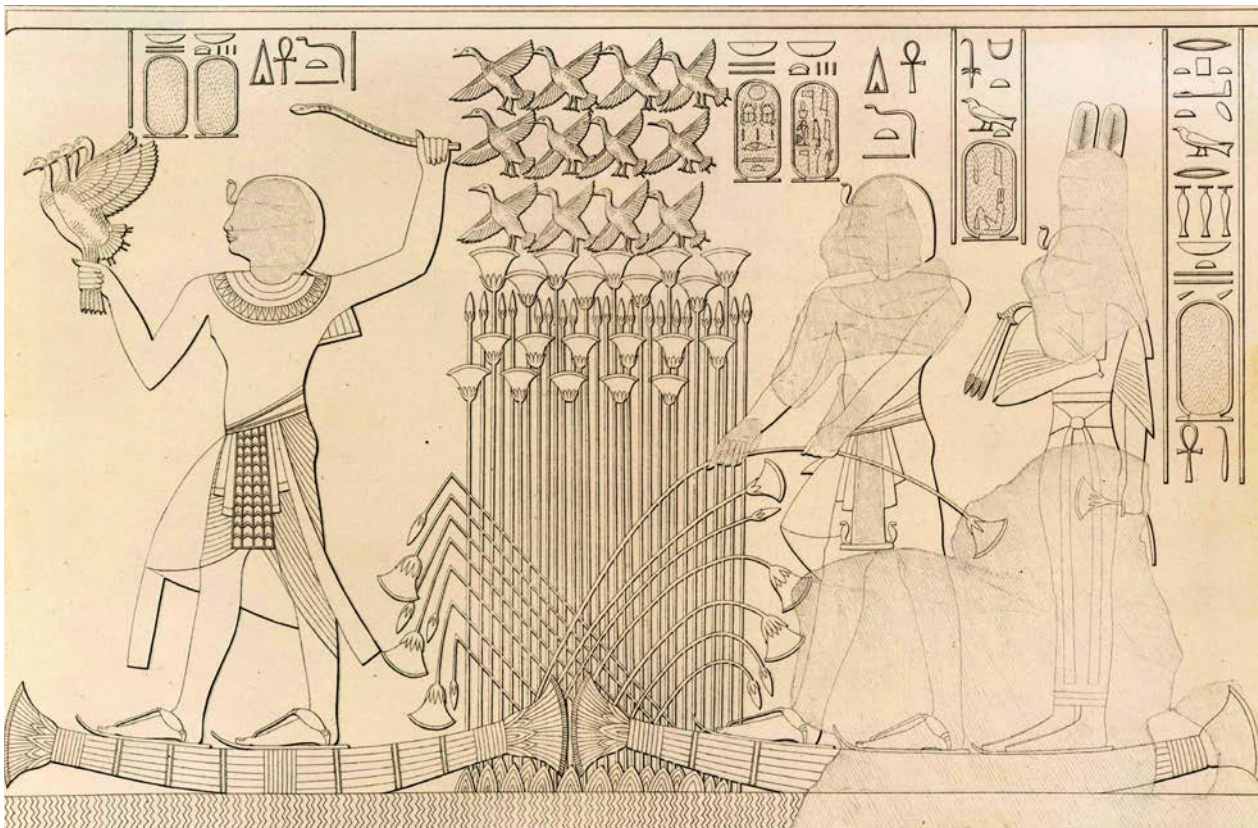
The other part of Ay's burial installation was his tomb in the West Valley of the Kings, WV 23.



As noted above, the tomb might have been begun for Tutankhamun, although no definitive evidence—e.g. foundation deposits—has been found.

The tomb's plan is clearly truncated as compared with





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A unique marsh scene from his tomb's burial chamber. Ay is shown fowling (with Queen Tey looking on) as well as pulling on papyrus to move their skiff forward. A third representation of the king, not shown here, has him spearing a hippopotamus.

This scene is unusual in two particular aspects: first, it is the only time that a queen has substantive representation in a king's tomb; second, while the hunting/fowling motif goes back to the Old Kingdom, its use in a burial chamber is not otherwise

attested, although a standard feature of pre-Amarna Theban private tomb-chapels and also known in royal memorial temples.

The scenes in Ay's tomb were deliberately defaced in antiquity; the representations of Ay and Tey, as well as their names, have been erased in every instance. This copy of the fowling scene was made by Ernst Weidenbach during the 1842–1845 Prussian Expedition. The young artist took the liberty of sketching in some of the missing details of Ay and his queen.

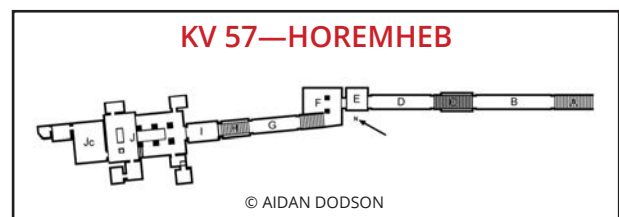
its original design, which was presumably akin to that later executed for Horemheb (right). Whether this was a result of emergency action on Ay's premature demise or a planned down-sizing is of course a moot point. On the other hand, Ay's likely advanced age at accession (he had been in a senior role since at least the early years of Akhenaten) may have led him to take a conservative approach to providing himself with a royal tomb. Indeed, this may have been the reason for his putative taking over of the tomb from Tutankhamun—to provide himself with a ready-to-use sepulchre.

Only the burial chamber of WV 23 was decorated and, like the tomb of Tutankhamun, its decoration was both abbreviated and innovative (see above).

WV 23 was equipped with a sarcophagus of the same basic design as that of Tutankhamun, and, as in Tutankhamun's tomb, the head of the sarcophagus was oriented towards the wall bearing the abbreviated *Amduat*. However, no sign of any canopic material, or shabti figures has ever come to light, the sum of recovered items having been put forward as evidence for a hurried and incomplete burial. This may tie in with the later destruction of the names and faces of the king and queen in the tomb: there is evidence for difficulties between Ay and his successor, Horemheb, and the latter may have carried out the bare minimum burial ritual necessary to legitimise his succession to Ay.

## HOREMHEB

While commander of the army under his predecessors, Horemheb had built a tomb at Saqqara but, although a uraeus was added to the brow of the now-king's figures where they appeared on the walls of his chapel, a new sepulchre was constructed to hold the now-divine body of Horemheb. This tomb, KV 57, was cut in the old, eastern, branch of the Valley of the Kings, thus marking an end to the experiment of the West Valley.



The tomb is interesting in being the first structurally-complete royal tomb known since the time of Amenhotep III. In many ways its plan closely follows that of WV 22, but with the crucial difference that it is laid out along a straight axis. This is usually explained as being a reflection of Atenist practice, since Akhenaten's tomb certainly lacks a turn. On the other hand, the latter's plan is clearly abbreviated, and it is possible that a turn was intended.





*Horemheb's unfinished crypt in the burial chamber of KV 57 in the Valley of the Kings. The red granite sarcophagus is beautifully carved with four goddess at the corners, their wings stretched out in protection. This sarcophagus was the last of the "corner goddess" type known to have been made.*

*The corner closest to us shows Serket, the scorpion goddess,*

*whose job is to protect the canopic jar containing the intestine. Her wing on the sarcophagus' long side reaches protectively over the jackal-headed deity Duamutef, one of the four sons of Horus, charged with guarding the king's embalmed stomach.*

*The north wall shows a seated Osiris presiding over the judgement scene of the Book of Gates, used here for the first time.*

The outer galleries of KV 57 were undecorated, with the exception of the well-chamber (E), the walls of which showed the king before the usual Theban mortuary deities. The fundamental difference between these scenes and the corresponding ones in earlier tombs is that, as well as being painted, they were carved in low relief (see page 41). Thus, unlike earlier tombs where decoration could be applied after the burial had taken place, the adornment of KV 57 had to be carried out at the same time as its cutting. Scheduling and resourcing implications following on from this innovation may explain why the decoration of the tomb was still incomplete at the king's death.

The antechamber was the next room to possess decoration, with the well-room motifs repeated. In addition to the wooden door leading from it into the burial chamber (J), a door lay at the antechamber's own entrance for the first time, a feature that continued in later tombs. The reliefs in the burial chamber, comprising parts of the new Book of the Gates, replacing the *Amduat* of earlier tombs, were never finished.

Many fragments of the royal funerary equipment remained in the tomb when discovered, including a granite sarcophagus (above), fragments of the canopic chest and guardian and divine figures of the kind found complete in the tomb of Tutankhamun. A quantity of skeletal material has been found in the tomb, possibly suggesting use of the tomb as a cache during the Third Intermediate Period: certainly, graffiti in the sepulchre show that there was official activity there around the beginning of that period.

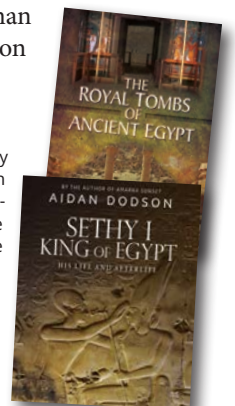
As noted above, Horemheb took over the unfinished memorial temple of Ay, enlarging it by the addition of a peristyle court and an extra pylon, extending the axis to nearly 300m long, and usurping its sculptural programme.

Although he ruled for almost 30 years, Horemheb appears to have died without a direct heir. His successor was his former vizier, Paramesse—an army officer and scion of a military family from the eastern Delta; probably of advanced years, he reigned as Ramesses I for probably less than two years.

And that is where we must wrap up this five-part series of abridged excerpts from *The Royal Tombs of Ancient Egypt*, which covers the entire range of burial places of the rulers of Egypt—and their families—from the very dawn of history down to Egypt's absorption into the Roman Empire. Grateful thanks to Aidan Dodson for his kind permission and help.



AIDAN DODSON is Honorary Professor of Egyptology in the Department of Anthropology & Archaeology at the University of Bristol, where he has taught Egyptology since 1996. His latest book, *Sethy I, King of Egypt: his life and afterlife* is due to be published by the American University in Cairo Press in October 2018.





# ALEXANDRIAN GOLD AND SAQQARAN CHEESE

## THERE WAS NO SARCOPHAGUS CURSE, BUT THE CHEESE IS DEADLY



© EGYPTIAN MINISTRY OF ANTIQUITIES

(LEFT) One of the small gold sheets discovered inside the enormous 30-tonne, black granite sarcophagus in Alexandria.

Live Science writer Owen Jarus contacted Jack Ogden, president of the Society of Jewellery Historians, who noted that unhooded snakes such as this “were seemingly connected with the goddess Isis,” and “had connotations of rebirth.”

“As a rule of thumb,” Ogden stated, “it would seem that snake jewellery was primarily a female thing,” but wasn’t sure whether the snake could be confidently connected with the female remains found in the sarcophagus.

Three skeletons were discovered in the sarcophagus: a woman, around 25 years of age, and two men in their 30s and 40s. A hole in one of the skulls led to speculation that at least one of the skeletons belonged to a soldier who had died valiantly in the service of the king. Subsequent examination revealed that the “wound” was more likely a rare case of trepanning, whereby a small hole was drilled into the skull in an emergency medical or mystical situation. DNA tests are being conducted to try and determine if the tomb occupants were related.

**T**HE SARCOPHAGUS WAS OPENED. The world didn’t end. No one drank the sarcophagus juice. In the last issue (NILE #15, Aug–Sept ’18) we reported on a “big black sarcophagus”, discovered intact in Alexandria, and the brouhaha surrounding the find.


The sarcophagus was likely a Late Period (ca. 30th Dynasty) piece reused in the Ptolemaic Era (332–30 B.C.). Some speculated that the resting place of Alexander the Great had been uncovered, while the sarcophagus’ foreboding appearance inspired the more nervous corners of the internet to dread what would happen when it was opened. In the end, the sarcophagus *did* contain something pretty evil: sewerage, and the rotted remains of three individuals.

Bizarrely, the Egyptian authorities were petitioned by a group of people wishing to be allowed to drink the sludge in the sarcophagus in order to “assume its powers”. But that, it seemed, was that.

However, there *was* more to be found inside the coffin: three small gold panels, just over three centimetres wide, each embossed with an image (above and opposite). These are described in the accompanying picture captions.

Another big August announcement came from Saqqara. A joint Egyptian-Italian team from the universities of Cairo and Catania have been working in the New Kingdom

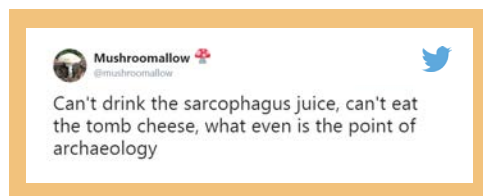
cemetery south of the causeway of Unas. On August 18 the joint team announced a unique discovery: cheese.

The team had been clearing the tomb of Ptahmose , a 19th-Dynasty Mayor of Memphis. It was first discovered (and plundered) in 1885 before being lost under drifting sands. Ptahmose’s tomb was rediscovered in 2010 by a Cairo University mission led by Prof. Ola El-Aguizy. During the 2013/2014 excavation season, some broken jars were found, with one jar containing a solidified whitish mass, as well as some canvas fabric, which was possibly used to cover the jar to preserve its contents.

In a study published in the journal *Analytical Chemistry*, the lead author, Enrico Greco (University of Catania) revealed that the whitish substance was a dairy product made from a mixture of cow milk and that of a sheep or goat. There was no trace of proteins from natural milk fermentation, Dr. Greco wrote. “For this reason, we can say that it is the oldest solid cheese ever found to date.”

Significantly, found inside the cheese were signs of a bacterium that caused brucellosis. This is an occasionally fatal disease transmitted to humans through the consumption of unpasteurized dairy products.

While the brooding black sarcophagus turned out to be benign, the cheese, it turns out, was potentially deadly.







(ABOVE) A small gold sheet impressed with what may be the seed pod of an opium poppy within a shrine. Speaking to Owen Jarus at Live Science, Jack Ogden notes that “Opium seems to have been quite widely used in Greco-Roman Egypt for medicinal purposes, but there may be some connection—in the ancient mind at least—between its sleep- and dream-inducing qualities and death and rebirth.”

(ABOVE) Jack Ogden, president of the Society of Jewellery Historians and an authority on Egyptian gold jewellery of the Ptolemaic Period, told Live Science that this piece shows a palm branch or ear of corn. Both of these motifs were commonly “related to fertility and rebirth”.

The author thanks Owen Jarus for his kind permission to quote from his Live Science article.

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# LOOKING BACK



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## Vintage Images of Ancient Egypt



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*Egypt's future King Farouk, just 16 years old, chats with Howard Carter in the Valley of the Kings. Accompanied by his entourage, Farouk's 1936 visit was the last recorded tour of the Valley that Howard Carter would conduct.*

*This may well, in fact, be the last photograph of Howard Carter in Egypt. Three years after it was taken, Howard Carter's heart failed, and he died at his home in London. This photo was among his possessions, a memento of the occasion.*

**H**OWARD CARTER WAS TIRED. The rollercoaster years following the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb had taken a significant toll on his health and spirit. Not only was there the methodical, decade-long excavation and documentation of the pharaoh's funerary goods, but Carter's fiery feud with the Egyptian Antiquities Department over control of the tomb and the division of its artefacts had been exhausting.

The concession to excavate in the Valley of the Kings expired in October 1929 and Carter spent much of what would be the last years of his life comparatively quietly, dividing his time between "Castle Carter", near the entrance to the Valley of the Kings, and his flat in London.

It took a big favour for a friend or a request from a special dignitary to draw him back to the Valley. In 1936, one such dignitary requested a tour, with the photograph above (and detail opposite) recording the event. On the back of the picture, Carter's niece, Phyllis Walker, wrote, "My uncle, Howard Carter, with H. M. King Farouk of Egypt, at [the] entrance to [the] Tomb of Tutankhmen in the Valley of the Kings, Luxor."

Farouk was born into a turbulent time: a year after the 1919 popular uprising against the British occupation of the

country. By 1922 London had declared Egypt an independent nation, and this heady nationalist fervour is seen as one of the reasons why Carnarvon and Carter were denied a portion of the artefacts found in Tutankhamun's tomb.

The "division of finds" had been long-standing practice for foreign excavators, who were granted pieces deemed as "duplicates" by the Antiquities Department. This pharaoh, however, and every single thing packed into his tiny tomb, belonged to Egypt.

It was perhaps from a perceived lack of fairness that after Carter died in 1939, a number of pieces were found in his home that had clearly originated in KV 62. This was rather embarrassing of course, and the artefacts were quietly delivered to the Egyptian consulate in London, who flew them to Cairo in a diplomatic bag.

King Farouk himself had graciously offered to act as a discreet mediator in the transfer of the pieces to the Egyptian Museum. He added them to his personal collection of antiquities instead. There they remained until Farouk was toppled from power in a military coup in 1952. Carter's KV 62 "strays" were finally deposited in the Egyptian Museum; the new revolutionary government was apparently more respectful of Tutankhamun's pharaonic treasures.

## U.K. & EUROPE

### ETERNAL EGYPT NEW ANCIENT EGYPT GALLERY OPEN



**Bolton Museum, Bolton**

Ongoing

A new gallery, entitled Bolton's Egypt, is now open, with a full size reproduction of the burial chamber of Thutmose III.

### GIFTS FOR THE GODS ANIMAL MUMMIES REVEALED



**Lyme Park, Cheshire**

Showing until 4 November 2018

Manchester Museum's travelling exhibition answers why the Egyptians mummified millions of animals.

### PAPYRUS FOR THE PEOPLE



**Petrie Museum, University  
College London**

Showing until 31 December 2018

Fascinating and entertaining insights into daily life in ancient Egypt from freshly-translated and conserved papyrus.

### EGYPT GODS, PHARAOHS, MEN



**Spazio Aquileia 123 exhibition  
center, Jesolo, Italy**

Showing until 15 December 2018

Artefacts from museums and private collections across Italy. Includes a 1:1 reproduction of Tutankhamun's tomb.

### GODS OF EGYPT



**Rijksmuseum van Oudheden,  
Leiden**

12 October – 31 March 2019

Over 500 objects on show from Dutch and international museums to bring the ancient Egyptian pantheon to life.

### IMAGES OF EGYPT



**University of Oslo, Museum of  
Cultural History**

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Tells the story of how Egypt became part of the Western modern world during the 19th and 20th centuries.

### THE FASCINATING WORLD OF THE PYRAMIDS



**MAMUZ Museum Mistelbach,  
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Explores the big questions surrounding Egyptian pyramids, with amazing pieces from museums across Europe.

### QUEENS OF EGYPT



**Pointe-à-Callière, Montréal**

Showing until 4 November 2018

Over 350 objects related to such legendary queens as Nefertari, Nefertiti, and Hatshepsut.

### MUMMIES IN BRUGES SECRETS OF ANCIENT EGYPT



**XPO Center Bruges, Belgium**

Showing until 11 November 2018

Touring exhibition from the *Rijksmuseum van Oudheden* in Leiden. Over 200 pieces —some have never before been shown.



# U.S.A. & CANADA

## DIVINE FELINES CATS OF ANCIENT EGYPT



Michael C. Carlos Museum,  
Emory University, Atlanta,  
Georgia

Showing until 11 November 2018

Explores the role of cats and other felines in Egyptian mythology, kingship, and everyday life.

## PAINT THE EYES SOFTER MUMMY PORTRAITS FROM ROMAN EGYPT



Block Museum of Art, North-  
western University, Evanston,  
Illinois

Showing until 11 November 2018

Rare Roman-Egyptian funerary portraits, painted on wooden panels in the Faiyum between the 1st and 3rd centuries A.D.

## KING TUT TREASURES OF THE GOLDEN PHARAOH



California Science Center,  
Los Angeles

Showing until 6 January 2019

The largest collection of artefacts from Tutankhamun's tomb ever to leave Egypt, focussing on the king's funerary treasures.

## A WOMAN'S AFTERLIFE



Brooklyn Museum

Ongoing

Women had an extra hurdle to deal with before they could access the afterlife: they had to first become a man.

## MUMMIES



The Field Museum of Natural  
History, Chicago

Showing until 21 April 2019

Sourced entirely from the Field Museum's own stores, this exhibition uses State-of-the-art scientific techniques help explore the Field Museums' mummies—and the people they once were.

## THE DISCOVERY OF KING TUT



Oregon Museum of Science &  
Industry, Portland

6 October 2018 – 27 January 2019

A recreation of Tutankhamun's tomb and his gilded funerary goods, including replica coffins and that iconic gold mask.

## NEDJEMANKH AND HIS GILDED COFFIN



Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
New York

Showing until 21 April 2019

Centred around the newly-acquired, Late Ptolemaic coffin of Ndjemankh, and featuring 70 other works from the Met.

## EGYPT THE TIME OF THE PHARAOHS



Royal BC Museum, Victoria

Showing until 31 December 2018

More than 300 original artifacts from the emergence of Egyptian civilization to the Ptolemaic and Roman eras.

## PASSING THROUGH THE UNDERWORLD EGYPTIAN ART FROM THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART (LACMA)



Vincent Price Art Museum,  
Los Angeles

Showing until 8 December 2018

An introduction to Egyptian art with a focus on myth and funerary practice. Sourced from the LACMA's rich collection.

## COMING UP



### KOM EL-HETTAN

The vast mortuary temple of Amenhotep III is making a comeback. Hourig Sourouzian looks back at 20 years of excavations and discoveries behind the Memnon Colossi.



### RAMESSES III

Is it right to label Ramesses III as the last great Pharaoh? Vanessa Foott looks at the successes and failures during the turbulent rule of this 20th-Dynasty king.



### THE DELTA CAPITALS, PART ONE: TANIS

Most people would be surprised to know that the ruins of five royal capitals can be found in the eastern Nile Delta. In this new series, Dr. Nicky Nielsen explores each one.



### THE MYSTERIOUS BENU BIRD

The benu bird is often suggested as the inspiration for the legend of the phoenix. Both were powerful symbols of renewal. Jan Koek compares the two.

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Vol. 3 · No. 5 · ISSUE No. 16  
OCTOBER–NOVEMBER 2018

NILE Magazine is published bimonthly in print, web and tablet/mobile editions.

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### PRINTING

CPUK Print Publishing  
First Floor, The Old Stables, Keysoe Row East  
Keysoe, Bedfordshire, MK44 2JB  
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# THE MISSING TOMBS

Private entry to the site of **Taposiris Magna**, thought by some to be the burial site of Cleopatra.

Private entry to the **Tomb of Senusret III** at Abydos.

Private entry to **KV55** in the Kings' Valley.

with **Dr Chris Naunton**

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