

INSCRIPTIONS

The Newsletter of the Friends of the Egypt Centre, Swansea

Issue 4 September 2000

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Ashmolean trip

The friends visited the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford on Saturday May 6th. We set off early and had a trouble-free journey. The raffle was a great success and added much-needed funds; by the way, many thanks to those of you who donated prizes for the raffle, not only on the trip but also at our other events. These gifts are much appreciated.

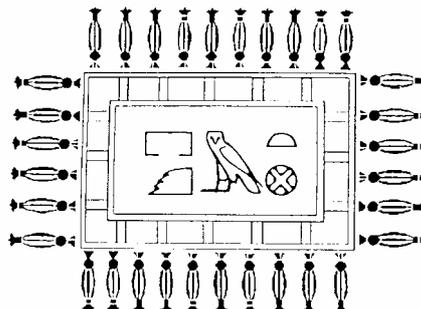
We arrived at Oxford slightly, well more than slightly, later than planned. We were met by Carolyn (The Mysterious Curator) and Anthony Donohue, an eminent Oxford-educated Egyptologist. Carolyn and Anthony guided us to one of Oxford's beautiful buildings where Anthony gave us an informative talk on the Ashmolean Egyptian collection and the Pitt Rivers Museum.

The collection at the Ashmolean was outstanding (if not displayed as well as ours). Everyone had their favourites, from the 'Amarna Princesses' to the gigantic Scorpion Mace head, and even the baskets containing dried figs and dates. My personal favourite was a tiny faience model of a small tubby child. What many people noticed was the lighting: it was far brighter than the lighting in our galleries, too bright some would say, perhaps even damaging the objects.

I didn't visit the Pitt Rivers collection (*see Carolyn's article on pages 8-9 - Ed.*) but I was informed that the exhibits were excellent, especially the shrunken heads!

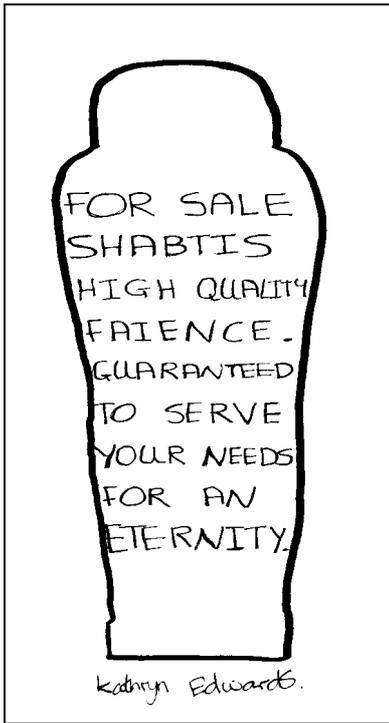
As it was such a lovely day, I decided to sample some of the many watering holes on offer!

The journey home was very entertaining with a superb quiz (written by Wendy and myself), which was enjoyed by all. The winner was Zoe Jackson, the ex-Vice Chairperson of the 'Friends', who scooped the prize for the second trip running. Zoe is banned from entering the next quiz! Only Joking!



Next season's trip will be to the biggest collection of Egyptian antiquities in the country, The British Museum. Book early.

Stuart Williams (Chairman)



Education news

Due to the ridiculous decision to remove Egyptology from Key Stage 2 of the National curriculum, the staff at the Egypt Centre have been looking for new ways to attract schools to the Centre.

After being approached by Mr Derek Sheehan at Olchfa Comprehensive to design a tour for his Design Technology pupils, the staff put together a package for the students including an afternoon of craft activities, making shabtis, amulets and pots. The pupils are now designing a 3D hieroglyphic alphabet to add to the many hands-on activities. This should prove popular with the partially sighted and blind visitors we have at the Centre.

The staff and volunteers have also designed an 'Egyptian Religion' package for Key stage 3 and 4 pupils studying R.E. This package includes the Egyptian Heliopolitan Ennead, offering formulas, the King's titulary and Ancient Egyptian concept of the afterlife.

Any teachers interested in booking their classes on one of the courses or who would like more information please contact the Centre on 295960.

Stuart Williams (Chairman)

Congratulations

Congratulations to all this year's graduates at the University of Wales Swansea - *but more importantly to the Friends and Volunteers of The Egypt Centre who graduated. They are:*

Mair Bowen	B.A.(Hons) Classics and Ancient History
Andrew Colman	B.A. (Hons) Classics and Ancient History
Michael Griffin	B.A. (Hons) Classics and Ancient History
Zoe Jackson	B.A. (Hons) Classics and Ancient History
Katrina Marsh (Kat)	B.A. (Hons) Classics and Ancient History
Rebecca Shields	B.A. (Hons) Ancient and Medieval History
Stuart Williams	B.A. (Hons) Classics and Ancient History

Ex-Volunteers:

Caren Martin	B.A. (Hons) Classics and Ancient History
Demelza Williams	B.A. (Hons) Classics and Ancient History

Your Editor:

Mike Mac Donagh	M.Phil.
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Cheers and Very Well Done to All!

We, the committee of the friends would like to express our thanks to Mike and his wife for producing all of our newsletters. Friends and visitors alike comment on its professionalism. Cheers Mike.

The Committee would also like to thank Debbie Williams and her grandmother Mrs Doris Payne for supplying the ingredients and baking the wonderful cakes that we sell at our lectures. Well done Debbie, you are our biggest fund raiser!

Stuart Williams (Chairman)





Ancient Egyptian Religion

The ancient Egyptians believed each individual was made up of 5 distinct parts.

The **Ka** was the life force of an individual. It existed at the moment of birth and was the conscience, guardian and guide of a person. It served as a 'double' when the person died and remained in the tomb. The term for death was 'going to one's Ka.' The Ka required everything the person had enjoyed in life and so had to be provided with food and drink offerings, shade, clothing and perfume. The Ka did not physically take the offerings but took their vital life-preserving properties.



The Ka is represented in hieroglyphs as a pair of up-raised hands.

The **Ba** was the 'personality' which made a human being unique. It was depicted as a human-headed bird that allows the soul of the person travel within and beyond the tomb. Ba was written in hieroglyphs as



These are two of the Ba birds on display.

Can you find the Ba of the Lady Musician painted on her coffin in our collection?

The **name** of the person, *Rn*, was considered to be a living part of the individual and was very important. It was believed that as long as a person's name was said they would be immortal. A great horror was to have your name removed or destroyed. The name was written on funerary objects placed within the tomb in order for the dead person to live forever in the afterlife. Examples can be seen in the *House of Life*. The name of the tomb owner **Tjenty** is written on the stone lintel illustrated below.

Can you find Tjenty's name? It is written using the four hieroglyphs:



The **shadow** *shwt*  was also an essential part of a person and in New Kingdom (1550-1069BC) tombs the black shadow of the deceased was often shown leaving the tomb with the *ba* bird. An individual was inseparable from his or her shadow, which mirrors every movement. The shadow protected the owner from harm and was believed to be very powerful and could move at great speed. If anyone behaved badly, there was a potential threat of their shadow being devoured by a demon known as the 'shadow gobbler' which was a catastrophe because a person could not exist without their shadow.

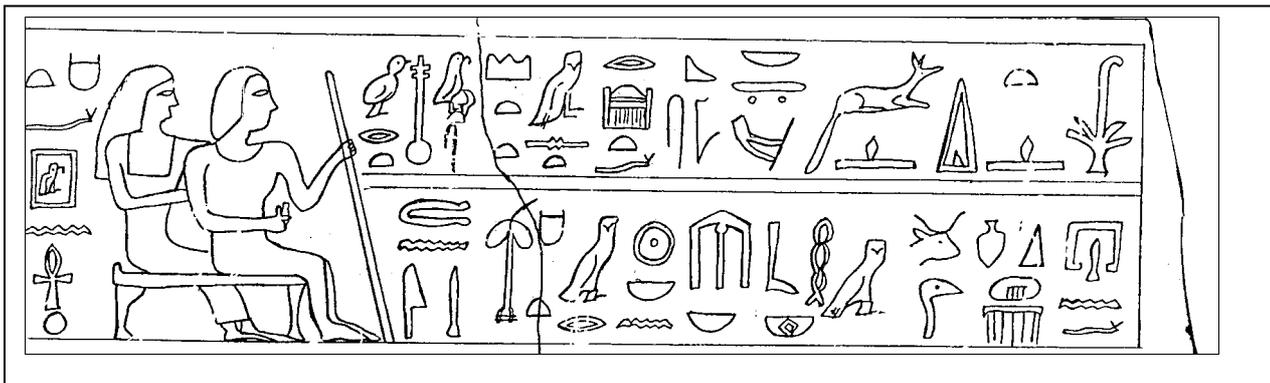
As Egypt was a very hot land the Egyptian word for shadow also meant 'shade' and 'protection.'

The **Akh** is created when the *ka* and *ba* meet. This is when a dead person exists in the 'afterworld.' The *akh* has to make a perilous journey through the underworld and was judged by the gods before passing to the 'Field of Reeds' the Egyptian heaven. During mummification amulets were placed on the body and spells were chanted to protect the *akh*. The *akh* is usually portrayed as a shabti-like mummiform figure.

The word *akh* was written with the sign of the crested ibis bird.



Wendy Goodridge





Editorial

Welcome to the fourth issue of our Newsletter and the first one of the 2000-2001 academic year. The Egypt Centre and its friends have continued to be active throughout the summer (some of the friends have even been to Egypt – in high summer!). Some of our activities are reported in this issue. Various friends have also gained degrees in the course of the summer (see page 2). Congratulations to one and all.

We look forward to another productive year for the Centre and its friends. A provisional calendar of events, for the first part of the year, is on Page 9. Perhaps we can persuade those who went to Egypt in the heat of the summer to tell us about their experiences and doings. It would give us something to dream about during the coming winter months (how about it folks?). All contributions to the newsletter are most welcome and should be sent to me at the Egypt Centre, marked FAO Mike Mac Donagh.

Mike Mac Donagh



History ?- in rhyme

- 1 Akhenaten the king
Nefertiti his wife
Did an unusual thing
Causing plenty of strife.
- 2 Declared only one god!
To be worshipped by all,
Putting priests out of jobs
Wasn't popular at all
- 3 Now what could they do?
No dole in those days
No-one was allowed
their "false" gods to praise
- 4 The priests all rebelled
He will have to go!
the king and his wives
they soon were no more.
- 5 From temples and tombs
they removed every word
About Akhenaten and co.
As if he'd never been heard.
- 6 Tutankhaten was next,
A boy not quite ten
their son? We're not sure
History's mixed up again
- 7 Once safe on the throne
all the gods were brought
back
Along with the priests
Who'd been given the sack
- 8 They changed the boy's name
Tutankhamun instead
Of his wonderful treasures
I'm sure you have read
- 9 Though young to the throne
He didn't live long
Barely a decade
To do anything wrong
- 10 Found deep in a valley
The Valley of Kings
Carter's first exclamation
"I see wonderful things"
- 11 But of old Akhenaten
And his beautiful queen
Few paintings or carvings
Are there to be seen
- 12 For worship of one god
His kingdom he lost
He stuck to his principles
At a very high cost
- 13 All of this story
Most of us know
And out of true history
Legends can grow
- 14 What of the curse
On Tutankhamun's tomb
Are you a believer
In misfortune and doom?
- 15 Go see the grandeur
of temples and halls
Where Egypt's vast history
Is writ on their walls

Merlys Gavin





MAAT THE GODDESS OF TRUTH AND JUSTICE

by Sandra Hawkins



Maat, the daughter of Re, was a self-created goddess. She was the personification of Truth and Justice and stood between illusions and reality, good and evil. She also represented a positive/negative role needed for creation. Maat was depicted as a woman wearing an ostrich plume on her head.

A picture of this feather  was often used as the hieroglyphic symbol both for her name and for the noun "Truth". Her name meant "that which is straight" and the Egyptians called her "Light of the World" saying she ruled Heaven, the Earth and the Underworld. Maat's symbol, the Ostrich Plume, may suggest the creation myth of the Cosmic Egg.

Maat's feather was used in the Judgement of the Dead, when it was weighed in a balance against the heart of the deceased person, undergoing Judgement to see if he/she was "Maaty", that is, if he/she had lived his/her life in conformity with Truth and Justice. The concept of Maat stood for much more than Truth and Justice, it also represented the divinely appointed order of things, the equilibrium of the universe with the world (i.e. cosmic order).

The regular movements of the Stars, the Sun, the Moon, the Seasons and the sequence of time within the world that Re created was according to his divine plan. Maat stood for social and religious order, the relationship between one human being and another, between mankind and the Gods, and between the living and the dead.

The daily voyage of Re was assisted by friendly deities. The journey was navigated by Maat and the God Thoth, while the boat was steered by the God Horus. Re journeyed through the underworld during the night and across the sky during the day. So Maat was also a protective deity for her father Re.

Kingship, in the person of Re, and order, in the person of Maat, came to Earth at the very beginning. In this way the world was synchronous with the creation of kingship and social order. Chaos, however, was a forever-present threat to the existence of this divinely created order. Only by practising Maat could the Egyptians preserve the harmony of the universe. This belief was the basis of Egyptian religion; and the cult practised in the temples was designed to uphold Maat so that Egypt should prosper.

Bibliography

Gods Of Ancient Egypt by Barbara Watterson

The Illustrated Guide To Egyptian Mythology by Lewis Spence, introduced by James Putnam

The Living Wisdom Of Ancient Egypt by Christian Jacq

I found this verse from *Hymn to Amon* in "The Living Wisdom of Ancient Egypt" by Christian Jacq:

He who is without righteousness will not enter the dwelling of Maat, the country of silence.

Only those whose hearts are true are admitted on the ferry, Since the ferryman will not take the unrighteous.

How fortunate they are, those who pass to the other side!





The Pantheon of Egyptian Gods

By Rebecca Shields, Vice-Chairman

This information has been taken from the Heliopolitan Creation myth.



Nun

- 'The Waters of Chaos'

Nun, the first major deity to exist, was the water from which the primeval hill emerged.



Atum

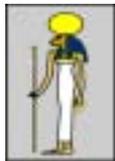
- 'The All' or 'Perfection'

Was the first creator god, and widely believed to be the first god to exist on earth. Was depicted as a man with a double crown.



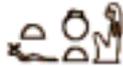
Amun

Was King of the gods. Depicted with a ram's head.



Tefnut

Depicted as a woman with the head of a lioness. Goddess of Moisture. Wife of Shu.



Shu

- 'He who rises up'

Depicted as a man wearing a headdress with feathers. God of the air who exists in between his two children Nut and Geb, keeping them separate.



Nut

Goddess of the sky, her body arches across the sky, wearing a dress decorated with stars. It was believed that at the end of every day, Nut swallowed Re and gave birth to him again the next morning.



Geb

Depicted as a man with a goose on his head. God of the Earth. Husband and brother of Nut. Made his son Horus the ruler of the living.



Osiris

Depicted as a mummified man wearing a white headdress. God of the dead and ruler of the underworld, also of resurrection and fertility as Egyptians believed he gave them the gift of Barley.



Isis

Depicted as a woman with a throne headdress, also with a pair of cow horns with a sun disk. Wife and sister of Osiris, mother of Horus. A goddess of protection.



Nephthys
- 'Lady of the Mansion'

Depicted as a woman with a headdress showing her name in hieroglyphs. A protective goddess of the dead. Sister and wife of Seth, mother of Anubis.



Seth

Depicted as a man with the head of an unidentifiable 'Seth animal'. God of chaos, representing all that threatened harmony in Egypt. Murdered his brother Osiris for the throne of Egypt and then fought with Horus for power.



Horus

- 'The One Far Above'

Depicted as a man with the head of a hawk. A god of the sky, and protector of the ruler of Egypt, believed to be incarnate in Pharaoh. Battled with Seth over the throne after the murder of Osiris. Became the ruler of the world of the living.



Anubis

Depicted with a Jackal head. God of Mummification and the dead, he watched over those making the journey to the underworld. He helped to mummify Osiris after he had been killed by Seth, thereby making him the first mummy.





Pharaoh's Titulary

At his coronation each Egyptian Pharaoh was given five names.

The '**Horus**' name shows the king as the falcon god Horus. It was believed that while the pharaoh lived he was the god Horus. At the time of his death he became Osiris the father of Horus and 'Lord of the Afterlife'.



This is a Horus name. The hieroglyphs are proceeded by the Horus hieroglyph.

The **Nebti or Two Ladies** name shows us that the pharaoh was protected by **Nekhbet**, the vulture goddess of Upper Egypt and **Wadjet**, the snake goddess of Lower Egypt, this also means that Egypt was a unified country. This is of particular importance when one thinks of one of the main purposes both of ancient and modern religion, the binding together of a community.



This is a 'Two Ladies' name. The hieroglyphs are proceeded by the two goddesses.

The third name again projects the pharaoh as the god Horus, but this time as a '**Golden Horus**'. The connection with gold is important as gold, *nbw* in ancient Egyptian, was the colour and nature of the gods.



This is a Golden Horus name. Horus sits upon the hieroglyph for gold.

It is the fourth name that we find most often produced. It is known as the Throne or ***nsw bity*** name meaning the '**King of Upper and Lower Egypt**'. It is also known as the



prenomen. The sedge plant is a symbol of Upper Egypt and the bee is a symbol of Lower Egypt. This name is again of particular importance as it shows a unified Egypt. Remember we saw earlier how important this was. This name was written inside a cartouche.

This is the prenomen of the pharaoh Senwosret I. 

Finally we have the **Birth name, 'Son of Re'** name or, as it is usually called, the nomen. This name proclaimed the pharaoh as the son of the god Re. This name was also written inside a cartouche. It is this name that spells out the name of the pharaoh that we are most familiar with.

This is the nomen of Senwosret I.



The prenomen, the 'King of Upper and Lower Egypt' name, and the nomen of some of Egypt's most famous pharaohs can be found both in our '**King Case**', in the House of Death, and on the '**Ring Bezels**' in the '**Amarna Case**', found in the House of Life. Why not try to find some of them?

Amenhotep I 'Amun is Pleased'

Djeser-ka-re 'Holy is the Soul of Re'

Tuthmosis I 'Born of the god Thoth'

A-kheper-ka-re 'Great is the manifestation of the Soul of Re'

Amenhotep III (Heqa-waset) 'Amun is Pleased, Ruler of Thebes'

Nub-maat-re 'Lord of Truth is Re'

Akhenaten 'Servant of the Aten'

Nefer-kheperu-re 'Beautiful are the manifestations of Re'

Smenkhkare (Djeser-kheperu) 'Vigorous is the Soul of Re, Holy of Manifestations'

Ankh-kheperu-re 'Living are the Manifestations of Re'

Tutankhamun (Heqa-iunu-shema) 'Living image of Amun, Ruler of Upper Egyptian Heliopolis'

Neb-kheperu-re 'Lord of Manifestations is Re'

Ramesses II (Mery-amun) 'Re has Fashioned Him, Beloved of Amun'

User-maat-re Setep-en-re 'The Justice of Re is Powerful, Chosen of Re'

Stuart Williams





Lieutenant-General A.H.L.F. Pitt Rivers (1827-1900)

An outing to Oxford was arranged by the Friends of the Egypt Centre on 6th May this year. Some of us visited the Pitt Rivers Museum, founded by Lieutenant-General Pitt Rivers in 1884. It was particularly fitting that the Friends visit the Museum at this time, 100 years since the death of the General.

Pitt Rivers had been born in Yorkshire but was brought up in London. In 1845 he was commissioned into the Grenadier Guards and became a specialist in musketry and the history of firearms. In studying development of firearms, Pitt Rivers arranged them in evolutionary sequences. It was largely from this interest that he came to believe that other artefacts could also be so arranged. After his marriage into the Stanley family he began mixing with a number of scientists including Herbert Spencer, Thomas Huxley and John Stuart Mill. His daughter married John Lubbock who was the first to divide the Stone Age into Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, and Neolithic. He began to collect ethnographic and antiquarian objects. In 1859 Darwin's *Origin of Species* was published and Pitt Rivers was an enthusiastic supporter of the idea that culture evolved in a similar way to nature. He wrote on primitive warfare, navigation and classification.

Very soon, Pitt Rivers' collection had filled his house. In 1851 he lent it to the museum at Bethnal Green. Later it was moved to South Kensington and then to Oxford. Here it was placed in an annexe to the University Museum.

In the 1860s Pitt Rivers visited Ireland and became fascinated by the prehistoric remains there and in his native England. He began fieldwork in Britain and helped lay the foundations of the study of archaeology in this country.

In 1880 he inherited large estates in Dorset and Wiltshire which enabled him to concentrate on subjects of interest to him. He was the first Inspector of Ancient Monuments under the Ancient Monuments Protection Act of 1882. From the 1880s, the General organised a number of large-scale excavations, mainly on his own property, of late prehistoric and Romano-British sites. His careful excavations related finds to their stratigraphic contexts. In addition it is believed that in 1878 he was the first person to recognise post-holes in archaeological excavations (Trigger: 203). Of particular interest to Egyptologists is the fact that he used his understanding of stratigraphy to prove the antiquity of some early flints in Egypt. Flints had been found around walls of tombs constructed c. 1500 BC near Thebes. The tombs were cut into gravel in which was contained a flint cut through by the tomb.

In addition, Pitt Rivers stressed the need to publish all of what was excavated rather than what was of interest to the excavator. Unfortunately the importance of this seems to have escaped many of his successors with the result that a number of excavations totally destroyed valuable archaeological evidence.

Much of Pitt Rivers' anthropological and archaeological work was done with the aim of educating the public. He believed that people should understand prehistory, to 'learn the links between past and present'. To this end he created two

museums, the Pitt Rivers in Oxford and the now defunct Farnham Museum in Dorset (though a large proportion of the archaeology collection from Farnham is now at the Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum). He also set up a public pleasure ground, Larmer Tree Grounds, to entertain the public. Here yaks and llamas roamed wild and free concerts were given on Sundays. The grounds are still open to visitors.

Those of us who saw the Pitt Rivers Museum were impressed by the variety and extent of the collection. Part of the appeal of the displays lay in the seemingly haphazard way artefacts were put together, usually devoid of any context. Before Pitt Rivers, ethnographic collections had tended to be arranged by sites or countries. Yet Pitt Rivers had very strong ideas on how his museums should be organised and also on their objectives.

Pitt Rivers believed objects should not be displayed simply for their aesthetic qualities, but to educate visitors. Therefore ordinary and typical objects were selected rather than special ones. In this sense he was stating the same idea as Flinders Petrie was later to impress, that is, that the ordinary artefact can say more about a society than the special object. This idea was new to museums. Indeed it could be argued that today, many museums do not show typical examples, even our own Egypt Centre.

Pitt Rivers liked to collect examples of objects showing the principal stages involved in their evolution. He used parallels with Darwinian evolution, arranging objects in sequence, from simple to complex, devoid of cultural specificity. Darwin's concept of linear evolution underlies many modern studies of typology, though it is also now much criticised.

Although Pitt Rivers generally seemed to believe that artefacts sequentially improve, he also recognised periods of degeneration. For example, he





was impressed by Upper Palaeolithic art and saw that which followed as degenerate. He also believed along with Mariette that the most lifelike sculptures of Egypt had been produced in the 3rd Dynasty.

Pitt Rivers believed that the gradual evolution of artefacts should be impressed upon the visitor to counteract revolutionary tendencies in Nineteenth Century politics, such as those of Engels and Marx. He wanted to show that the Law of Nature 'makes no jumps' and showed this graphically to 'make men cautious how they listen to scatter-brained revolutionary suggestions' (Pitt Rivers 1891: 116).

In addition Pitt Rivers believed that his arrangement of prehistoric artefacts with modern ethnographic ones better showed the function of objects. He considered the artefacts of prehistoric people and modern day hunter-gatherers as

comparable and, like many of his era, saw hunter-gatherers as the remnants of earlier societies. Pitt Rivers did not believe such 'savages' could benefit from 'civilization' other than by slavery. Such ideas are obviously no longer accepted. Hunter-gatherers of today, like farming societies, are believed to have undergone changes in culture; they are not a stagnant remnant of some earlier evolutionary stage. In addition, hunter-gatherer cultures are just as complex as those of agriculturists. In fact, the whole idea of progress is now seen as an outdated view of history replete with notions of Western superiority and racism. But Pitt Rivers was not alone in holding these views; like all archaeologists and historians he could only view the past in terms of his own cultural background. It is easy to criticise his views now with the benefit of hindsight.

Pitt Rivers' excavation techniques, and insistence on publishing everything, were ahead of their time and unfortunately were

only copied by a few until much later. His ideas on cultural evolution are perhaps more suspect, though their essence is still invoked by some neo-Darwinian schools of thought.

Suggested Reading and Bibliography

Bowden, M., 1991. *Pitt Rivers: The life and archaeological work of Lt-Gen. Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt Rivers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pitt-Rivers, A.H.L.F., 1891. Typological Museums, as Exemplified by the Pitt-Rivers Museum at Oxford and his Provincial Museums at Farnham, Dorset. *Journal of the Society of the Arts* 40: 115-22.

Thompson, M.W., 1977. *General Pitt-Rivers: Evolution and Archaeology in the Nineteenth Century*. Bradford-on-Avon: Moonraker Press

Trigger, B.G., 1989. *A History Of Archaeological Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

You might also like to visit the Web site of the Pitt Rivers Museum which has further information on the General at:

http://www.prm.ox.ac.uk/HISTORY_OF_MUSEUM/prm_history.html

Carolyn Brown



Forthcoming events

AGM (Details to follow). The AGM will be followed by a talk by our Chairman, Stuart Williams, who will have recently returned from Egypt, entitled *Egypt II The Return!* After the talk there is a chance for all members to get together with a "bring-a-bottle" (nibbles will be provided).

Wednesday October 11th Lecture by Ken Kitchen on *The Mysterious Land of Punt*. Venue and details to follow.

November (details to follow) Lecture by Elizabeth Bloxham. The first public talk about the new findings from the excavations at Chephren's Quarry.

Wednesday December 6th Lecture by our president Dr Gill From *Knossos to Amarna and back again: The Excavations of John Pendlebury*. 7.30 p.m. Room 152 North Arts





THE BOOK OF THE DEAD

What is it?

by Zoe Jackson

Mention the *Book of the Dead* and some people might think of magic spells performed over corpses in order to bring them back to life. The recent movie *The Mummy* may have something to do with this. In it, the evil mummy is brought back to life when someone reads from something called the Black Book of the Dead, and is then destroyed when someone else reads from the Golden Book of Amun-Ra. Needless to say, neither book exists. But the ancient *Book of the Dead* does contain passages which are sometimes called spells by Egyptologists, and it did have the intention of bringing the dead back to life, but safely in the afterlife, after avoiding all the obstacles that would be placed in his or her way.

The earliest *Book of the Dead* papyri date to the middle of the Fifteenth Century BC, but the spells themselves have their origins in the Pyramid Texts, writings which were first inscribed inside the pyramid of King Wenis in about 2345 BC, but were probably centuries older. They were designed exclusively for royalty, so that the king could join the gods. The earliest belief contained in the Pyramid Texts was in an astral afterlife among the stars. Later spells state that the king would join Ra, the sun-god, in his daily journey across the sky. Some spells also identify the dead king with Osiris, who would later become the pre-eminent god of the dead. This happened when, during a period of anarchy which followed the collapse of the Old Kingdom in about 2181 BC, tombs were robbed and cemeteries were desecrated. In order to prevent such wrongdoing in the future the idea of a judgement after death was introduced, for actions committed during life, and it soon became Osiris before whom these judgements took place. Spell 125 of the *Book of the Dead* is wholly concerned with the judgement of the dead, and its accompanying illustration depicts the weighing of the heart against the feather of Ma'at (or truth) before Osiris and a multitude of other gods.

During the Middle Kingdom (2040 - 1786 BC), at the same time as the introduction of the idea of a judgement after death, funeral practices and beliefs were democratised and a guaranteed afterlife became open to all who could afford the necessary equipment. The spells of the *Pyramid Texts* were added to, and written on the coffins of commoners, which is why they are now known as the *Coffin Texts*. They also illustrate a new belief in which the deceased will spend an eternity in the Field of Reeds, a place almost identical to Egypt, but better, where the crops would grow taller, and the cattle would become fatter. However, the old beliefs were not discarded. During the New Kingdom (1550 - 1070 BC), when the spells were written on papyrus to make them even more easily available, three distinct traditions can be identified: the belief in an astral afterlife, the belief in an afterlife spent with Ra, and the belief in an afterlife in the Field of Reeds under the rule of Osiris. The ancient Egyptians were always extremely reluctant to abandon any of the old ideas, and they saw nothing wrong with this. However, it did lead to

confusion, as often the scribes who copied out the *Book of the Dead* for customers did not understand what they were writing, and many errors were made.

The name *Book of the Dead* was given to this collection of writings by modern Egyptologists. The ancient Egyptians themselves called it the *Book of Coming Forth by Day* because these spells were thought to give the deceased the power to emerge from the tomb after death and transfer to the next world. The total number of spells discovered amounts to almost two hundred, but no one copy contains all of them. Normally, these spells were written on papyrus which could be placed in or on the coffin, bound up with the body amongst the wrappings, or placed inside a wooden statuette of the funerary god Ptah-Sokar-Osiris, but they could also be written on the walls of the tomb, on the coffin, or, in the case of Spell 30B, inscribed on a large scarab which would then be placed over the deceased's heart. This was believed to have the effect of preventing the heart from speaking out against its owner during judgement. Most papyri also have illustrations, called vignettes, which are meant to illustrate certain spells. In the earliest and latest copies of the *Book of the Dead* the vignettes are quite simple, but in other copies they are elaborate colour illustrations, so elaborate in fact that they become more important than the text which is often full of mistakes and sometimes almost illegible.

The purpose of the *Book of the Dead* was to guide the deceased through the many traps and pitfalls that might befall him on the way to the afterlife. The Egyptians believed that the road to the afterlife was extremely dangerous, and that the deceased would need guidance. They therefore provided the individual with the correct procedures to follow and the appropriate speeches to recite at certain points on the journey in order to reach his goal. One Egyptologist has said about the *Book of the Dead*; "Travelling to the next world was very much like taking an examination with prior knowledge of all the questions and a supply of prepared answers in one's possession" (Spencer 1982). For this reason the *Book of the Dead* was an essential part of the funerary equipment for any Egyptian with the means to buy one and was also the reason why they were often buried so close at hand. It is also why so many different examples have survived to give us an insight into what the Egyptians thought would happen to them after they died.

An example of the *Book of the Dead* and of Ptah-Sokar-Osiris figurines can be found in the *House of Death* on the ground floor of the Egypt Centre.

Further reading

Faulkner, R.O. 1985 *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*, London, British Museum Press

Spencer, A J. 1982 *Death in Ancient Egypt* London; Penguin

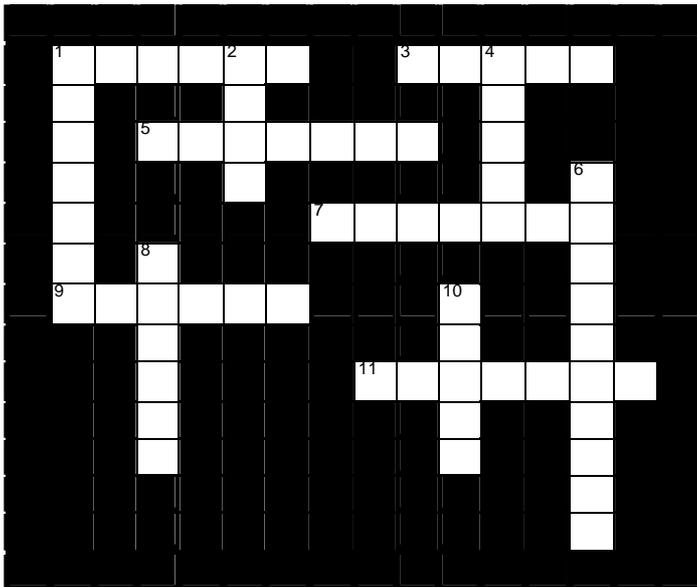




Puzzle page

Q	H	D	W	E	S	R	N	U	M	A	H	K	N	A	T	U	T
T	Y	I	U	S	U	O	I	O	P	A	S	D	F	A	G	H	J
I	O	P	E	A	M	N	K	B	V	C	X	Z	R	L	K	N	D
U	Y	N	T	R	M	R	E	A	W	Q	A	A	S	D	D	O	I
M	A	G	H	J	O	U	I	K	R	L	K	H	G	U	F	T	M
T	Z	X	N	B	C	G	T	M	V	H	Q	A	A	Z	W	S	A
N	H	Y	T	Q	G	B	L	E	S	V	A	M	C	X	S	A	R
E	R	T	N	E	C	T	P	Y	G	E	U	W	B	N	M	T	Y
M	J	U	E	B	U	U	I	K	P	T	T	L	K	O	P	T	P
S	C	Q	F	E	U	P	A	B	E	H	A	P	Y	P	N	E	M
U	S	X	E	H	B	H	N	F	B	S	I	T	Y	N	Y	S	N
J	I	D	R	S	S	H	A	B	T	I	S	C	J	B	U	O	B
F	B	R	T	E	D	D	Y	G	V	R	R	H	S	R	H	R	V
R	U	T	I	N	H	F	H	R	R	I	F	G	O	V	Y	R	C
C	N	N	T	U	R	T	B	F	F	S	T	H	D	G	U	R	X
P	A	I	I	F	G	G	D	V	V	O	G	N	F	T	J	D	X
U	N	M	B	M	O	T	A	B	A	T	S	U	M	U	M	C	Z

- Pyramid
- Osiris
- Horus
- Sokar Hawk
- Duamutef
- Hapy
- Imset
- Qebhsenuf
- Shabtis
- Anubis
- Imset
- Egypt centre
- Hieroglyphics
- Tutankhamun
- Senat
- Rosetta stone
- Nefertiti
- Mustaba tomb



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Across

- 1) God of Mummification
- 3) One of the four sons of Horus
- 5) The material which consists of a mixture of clay and glass
- 7) The stone which has ancient Egyptian, demotic, and Greek writing on it
- 9) Servants that worked on the land in the afterlife
- 11) The name of the building where mummified people were placed

Down

- 1) Special charms found under wrappings of mummy.
- 2) Wife to Osiris and mother of Horus
- 4) Ancient Egyptian board game
- 6) During mummification, the lungs, stomach, liver and intestines are wrapped and put into these
- 8) Items placed on the coffin which were thought to bring food to the dead
- 10) The child God that had four sons
- 12) Servants that worked on the land in the afterlife

