



The Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities
La Société pour l'Étude de l'Égypte ancienne

47th Annual Scholars' Colloquium & Symposium
3rd - 5th November 2023

'Sakkara: Where the Pyramids were born'

Weekend Agenda, Abstracts of Scholars' Papers
and Symposium Speakers' biographies



Weekend Overview

All Times in Eastern (Toronto) Time

(Note: timings may be subject to last minute changes if circumstances dictate)

Date	Time	Event (for details of presentations, see below)	Where
Friday, 3 rd November	9am - 5pm	Scholars' Colloquium Day 1 A series of brief presentations on current work and research on Ancient Egypt	4 Bancroft Avenue, Toronto
Friday, 3 rd November	7pm - 8pm	Annual General Meeting of the SSEA / SÉÉA Followed by Members' Reception	2 nd Floor, 4 Bancroft Avenue, Toronto
Saturday, 4 th November	9am - 5pm	'Sakkara: Where the Pyramids were born' 47 th Annual Symposium	Koffler Auditorium 569 Spadina Avenue, Toronto
Sunday, 5 th November	12:30pm - 4:30pm	Scholars' Colloquium Day 2 Continuation of brief presentations begun on Day 1 (including Virtual Posters)	Koffler Auditorium 569 Spadina Avenue, Toronto

Friday, November 3rd - Colloquium Day 1

Time	Speaker	Topic
9:00-9:05	Welcome & Introduction	
9:05-9:35	Michele Marcolin	"More esteemed than any foreign ruler": Iny's Biography Once Again
9:35-10:05	Anett Rózsa	"Hail to You, Khonsu-in-Thebes-Neferhotep, the Noble Child who Came Forth from the Lotus!" A Demotic Magical Spell with a Lunar Child Deity?
10:05-10:35	Nenad Marcovic	The Mendesian Ram at Memphis: Reconstructing a Memphite Priestly Family during the Saite-Persian Era
10:35-10:45	Break	
10:45-11:05	Wahid Omran	Resurrection in Akhmim: Exploring El-Salamuni Necropolis
11:05-11:35	Marta Kaczanowicz	Butchering Queens and Ailing Princesses: Saite Royal Women
11:35-12:05	Aleksandra Pawlikowska- Gwiazda	"(...) they came north this year and bought 3 <i>diploe</i> of wine (...)". Mud stoppers and the wine trade in Late Antique Western Thebes
12:05-1:15	Lunch	
1:15-1:45	Emanuele Casini	Between the lines: the case study of tomb n. 39 in the Valley of the Queens examined in the light of unpublished archival documents
1:45-2:15	Christina Geisen	"Turn around, place yourself on the back, and be blind" or how the agency of Heka effects the victory over evil creatures

2:15-2:30	Break	
2:30-3:00	Matthieu Hagenmüller	"Catch the thief!" Police iconography in private tombs from the Old to the New Kingdom
3:00-3:30	Alessandro Piccolo	On the Source of the ΝΕΪλοΣ
3:30-3:40	Break	
3:40-4:10	Mennah Aly	"The eastern door of heaven is open to you. Nut has embraced you. She whose hair is long, and whose breasts hang down": The Embracing Arms and the Heaven's Doors
4:10-4:40	Silvia Nigrelli	Blindness in the Ebers Papyrus: A New Interpretation of the Term <i>Spt</i> .
4:40-5:10	Ilaria Sieli	Lower Nubia from Chiefdom to State: The Development of A-Horizon Royalty and its Relations with Early Egypt Through the Analysis of the Cemeteries of Sayala and Qustul
5:10	Wrap-up	

Saturday, 4 th November			
SYMPOSIUM: Sakkara: Where the Pyramids were Born			
Time	Speaker	Title	Zoom / In Person
9:00am	Welcome and Introduction		In Person
9:30am	Ron Leprohon	Sakkara: A Brief History	In-Person
10:30am	Mark Trumpour	Turning Points: Mariette's Discovery of the Serapeum	In-Person
10:50am	Break		
11:00am	Miroslav Barta	Saqqara Cemetery in the Third Dynasty	On-Line
12:00pm	Lunch		
1:00pm	Christelle Alvarez	The legacy of the Pyramid Texts: new insights from Saqqara	In-Person
2:00pm	Break		
2:10pm	Christian Greco	Recent New Kingdom discoveries	On-Line
3:10pm	Paul Nicholson	The Anubis Cemeteries and Animal Cults	In-Person
4:10pm	Break		
4:20pm	Steve Vinson	Setna Khaemwase in Ankhtawy: The Memphite Necropolis in Demotic Tales and Legends	In-Person
5:20pm	Wrap-up		

Sunday's schedule overleaf

Sunday, November 5th - Colloquium Day 2 <i>(Note clocks move back overnight)</i>		
Time	Speaker	Topic
12:30-1:00	Paul Nicholson, Henry Bishop-Wright	Of Ibises and Baboons: the acquisition and breeding of sacred animals at North Saqqara
1:00-1:30	Deborah Sweeney	Looking for Mutemwia (i)
1:30-1:45	Break	
Virtual Poster 1:45-2:05	Ariadne Argyros	The Widow's Lament: Mourning Women in Ancient Egyptian Funerary Rituals
Virtual Poster 2:05-2:25	Shelby Navone	Beyond Grave Concubines: Redefining the Narrative and Unravelling the Complex Symbolism of 'Isis-Aphrodite' Terracotta Figures in Greco-Roman Egypt
Virtual Poster 2:25-2:45	Elizabeth Learning	Constructing the Cosmos: Developing the Iconography of Astronomy in the Predynastic Period
2:45-3:00	Break	
3:00-3:30	Miriam Bueno Guardia	Frontality and dance in New Kingdom art
3:30-4:00	Krystal Pierce	An Egyptian House in a Canaanite City: Building 1500 at Beth-Shean in Light of New Kingdom Egyptian Cultural Identity
4:00-4:30	Jinyan Wang	Up for grabs? The Levant between Egypt and Babylonia at the fall of Assyria (630–567 BCE)
4:30	Wrap-up & Disperse	

Sakkara: Where the Pyramids were born

Biographies of speakers

Christelle Alvarez is Assistant Professor of Egyptology and Assyriology at Brown University with a primary focus on ancient Egyptian philology, epigraphy, beliefs and practices, and the socio-historical context of the 3rd millennium BCE. Since 2011, she has been a member of the Mission archéologique franco-suisse de Saqqâra (MafS) and has directed fieldwork at the pyramid of King Qakare Ibi (8th Dynasty, c.2150–2134 BCE) in South Saqqara. Her current work includes the publication of the hieroglyphic ritual texts inscribed on the walls of the burial chamber of king Ibi based on the find of hundreds of new fragments and the reassessment of the architectural structure of the pyramid itself. She is also working on a monograph about the development of ritual texts at the end of the third millennium BCE, which aims to provide a holistic view of the texts inscribed in the pyramid of Ibi and explores the tradition of decorating the subterranean areas of pyramids in the Late Old Kingdom.

Miroslav Bárta is a Czech Egyptologist and archaeologist, having studied for his Ph.D. in both Prague and Hamburg (1994–1997). In 2011 he was appointed as director of the Czech excavations in Abusir. He also served as the director of the Czech Institute of Egyptology in Prague and as a vice-rector of the Charles University.

Bárta specializes in the archaeology and history of the third millennium B.C. He has also been largely involved in comparative study of complex civilisations and their dynamics in multidisciplinary perspective.

Bárta has been a frequent lecturer both at home and abroad and he often lectures for Czech companies, international financial institutions and international corporations, but has also presented his work at the OECD in Paris and has given lectures in many other cities. His latest publications are *Analysing collapse: the rise and fall of the Old Kingdom* (AUC Press 2019) and *Seven Laws. How civilisations rise and fall* (Jota 2020 in Czech).

Bárta is author of the seven laws of civilisations theory published in 2019 (Bárta, M., and M. Kovář, eds. 2019 *Civilisations: Collapse and Regeneration. Addressing the Nature of Change and Transformation in History*. Prague: Academia.).

In 2019 he was awarded the *Czech Mind Prize*, given by the Czech government to the best scientist in the country of the year. In 2023 he was elected foreign member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He is a member of the American Research Centre in Egypt, member – correspondent of the German Archaeological Institute and a member of New York's Explorers Club.

Christian Greco has been Director of the Museo Egizio in Turin, Italy since 2014. Born in Arzignano (VI) in 1975, he trained mainly in the Netherlands, and is an Egyptologist with vast experience working in museums. He curated many exhibition and curatorial projects in the Netherlands (Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden; Kunsthal, Rotterdam; Teylers Museum, Haarlem), Japan (Okinawa, Fukushima, Takasaki and Okayama museums), Finland (Vapriikki Museum, Tampere), Spain (La Caixa Foundation) and Scotland (National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh). While at the head of the Museo Egizio, he has set up important international collaborations with museums, universities and research institutes all across the world. Greco is also a dedicated teacher. He is currently teaching courses in the material culture of ancient Egypt and museology at the Università di Torino, Pavia, Napoli, the Scuola di Specializzazione in Beni Archeologici of the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan and the New York University in Abu Dhabi. Fieldwork is particularly prominent in Greco's curriculum. For several years, he was a member of the Epigraphic Survey of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago in Luxor. Since 2011 he has been co-director of the Italian-Dutch archeological mission at Saqqara. Greco's published record includes many scholarly essays and writings for the non-specialist

public in several languages. He has also been a keynote speaker at a number of Egyptology and museology international conferences

Ron Leprohon is Professor of Egyptology in the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, University of Toronto, and past Chair of the Department. Ron served as Education Officer and Project Egyptologist for the exhibition of the Treasures of Tutankhamun in Toronto in 1978-79, and has done archaeological work in Egypt for both the Akhenaten Temple Project and the Dakhleh Oasis Project. In 1981 he became the first director of the Canadian Institute in Egypt. The recipient of a University of Toronto Faculty of Arts and Science Outstanding Teaching Award in 2002-2003, he has also published a two-volume study of the funerary stelae in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts as well as *The Great Name*, a comprehensive study of the three thousand-year history of the titulary of the pharaohs

Paul Nicholson is a professor of archaeology at Cardiff University where he specialises in Egyptian archaeology and early technology. He has excavated in Egypt since 1983, particularly at Amarna, Memphis and Saqqara. His work at Amarna is published as *Brilliant Things for Akhenaten* (2007) and that at Memphis as *Working in Memphis* (2013). His most recent work at Saqqara has been *The Catacombs of Anubis* (2021). He has also edited (with Professor Ian Shaw) and part written *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries* (2000). *The British Museum Dictionary of Ancient Egypt* was also co-written with Professor Shaw (1995/2008). He is currently working on a Leverhulme Funded project *Dating the Dead: Chronology and Context at Saqqara's Sacred Animal Necropolis* which aims to better understand the chronology and cults of the Saqqara animal necropolis.

Mark Trumpour is the current President of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities. A member for many years, he has served in the past as Vice President and Assistant Treasurer. Mark has lectured and taught in several places, and has articles printed in both popular and peer-reviewed publications. He has been a lead researcher for the project "In Search of Ancient Egypt in Canada". Mark is also a Departmental Associate at the Royal Ontario Museum.

Steve Vinson is Professor of Egyptology at Indiana State University - Bloomington in the department of Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures. He directs the Digital Egyptian Sculpture Project, which aims to produce high-quality, 3D models of Egyptian objects in museum collections; current partner institutions include the Brooklyn Museum of Art, the MC Carlos Museum (Emory University) and the Peabody Museum (Yale University). Along with Rita Lucarelli (University of California - Berkeley) and Joshua Roberson (University of Memphis), he is co-editor of the volume *Ancient Egypt, New Technology: The Present and Future of Computer Visualization, Virtual Reality and Other Digital Humanities in Egyptology* (Harvard Egyptological Studies 17, Brill) which appeared earlier this year; this was the proceedings of the first Ancient Egypt, New Technology conference, held March 29-30, 2019 in Bloomington. Vinson received his PhD in Egyptology from John Hopkins University in 1995. He has written extensively on ancient Egyptian boats, ships and shipping, and on ancient Egyptian literature.

Scholars' Colloquium 2023

Abstracts of Presentations

'More esteemed than any foreign ruler': Iny's biography once again

Michele Marcolin, Waseda University, Japan

The study of the Pharaonic civilisation includes in its sphere of attention quite naturally areas and cultures that are not necessarily placed in close proximity with the country's borders, such as, in the north-eastern direction, Sinai, Palestine, and Syria. In recent times, however, new research developments have prompted a spatial and chronological stretching of these horizons, challenging comfort zones and assumptions that may have consolidated in the past more through academic traditions and divisions between disciplines than objectively verifiable evidence.

One of those catalysts is undoubtedly the biographic inscription of the seal bearer of the god Iny, the first parts of which were disclosed to the public at the 2002 Scholars' Colloquium. The inscription is indeed the first and only written account of the Old Kingdom to chronicle with fair detail the Egyptian frequentations of the Levantine coasts during the 6th dynasty. The toponyms and details it provided, particularly with its subsequent additions, have shed new light not only on the relations between Egypt, Byblos, and the Syro-Palestinian coasts but have also given new impulse to the interpretation of pre-existing data pertaining to those north-eastern neighbours, with significant implications for the study of each horizon, last but not least the identification of the toponym of Egypt in the royal archives of Ebla.

A recently published fragment of this biography adds further detail to this picture, giving more glimpses into the Egyptian foreign policy of the period and the dynamics of the elite involved with it. The fragment is here briefly discussed.

“Hail to You, Khonsu-in-Thebes-Neferhotep, the Noble Child who Came Forth from the Lotus!” A Demotic Magical Spell with a Lunar Child Deity?

Anett Rózsa, Ruprecht-Karl University of Heidelberg

In most publications on Khonsu it is stated that this deity is the ancient Egyptian God of the Moon, so, the (exclusive) lunar connotation of this god is usually given as an unshakable fact.

This presentation will analyse a magical spell from one of the most famous bi- or trilingual magical papyrus (“PDM xiv”) from Thebes, dated to the late 2nd century AD, namely the “The Vessel Inquiry of Khonsu” (PDM xiv 239–295, recto col. IX.1–X.22), a very complex divination text written in Demotic. The focus will be on the first half of this source, on lines 1–19, that includes a hymn invoking Khonsu (the Child) with his epithets describing him as a luni-solar deity (from the lotus).

Although this spell is very well-known, frequently cited and was published countless times in several modern languages, the detailed interpretation of its interesting aspects and their contexts has not been done yet. The main purpose of the presentation on the one hand is to elaborate these and thereby to show the complexity of this “lunar” deity.

On the other hand, it would like to present how important it would be for scholars to revise aspects and motifs, while editing ancient texts and translating them, that were often considered as basic facts not just in Egyptology but also in its neighbouring disciplines. This revision of Egyptian elements is especially needed in the Late and Graeco-Roman Periods, of which many summary studies on different topics are lacking, and in which these “basic facts” are usually passed over and over from one to another without any scepticism or notes in publications on them

The Mendesian Ram at Memphis: Reconstructing a Memphite Priestly Family during the Saite-Persian Era

Nenad Marković, University of Reading

During the Saite-Persian period in Memphis, members of local cult personnel held a variety of religious positions, and some of them focused on the sacred Mendesian ram. These specific titles are *ḥm-nṯr Bꜣ nb ddt*, “Divine Servant of Ram Lord of Mendes”, and *wꜣ-nṯr.wj*, “He who Judges the Two Gods”.

This paper intends to reassemble and analyse a family of priests from Memphis, which is documented for eight generations, stemming from the beginning of the sixth century BCE to the middle of the fifth century BCE. Notably, this family held both said titles. The former title is characteristic of earlier generations (three male members are explicitly assigned this position), while the latter is common for the generations that lived under Persian rule. The family in question had been overlooked until now, as the Serapeum votive stelae that prove their existence are mainly unpublished and, until recently, inaccessible for study. Hence, an unpublished stela, from regnal year 31 of Darius I (488 BCE), provides evidence that the Ram of Mendes had a cultic place in Memphis, likely within the Ptah temple complex, as showed by the title “divine servant of Ptah and the Ram, Lord of Mendes, Great God, who resides in Hutkaptah (*ḥm-nṯr Pth Bꜣ nb ddt nṯr ꜣ ḥrj-jb ḥwt-kꜣ-Pth*)”. The family names mirror the devotion to both Ptah and the Ram of Mendes, as well as the matrimonial ties to other local clerical families. The last point is highly relevant to the ongoing research of the sacerdotal endogamy at Memphis: with each recorded marriage, brides were taken from – and also provided to – other priestly families.

Ultimately, this study will provide us with a better understanding of little-known details of the Memphite temple community during the middle centuries of the first millennium BCE.

Resurrection in Akhmim: Exploring El-Salamuni Necropolis

Wahid Omran, Fayoum University

The El-Salamni Mountain is the main necropolis of Akhmim during the Graeco-Roman period. It lies about 6 km east of the modern Akhmim. The Mountain is divided into eight registers run from bottom to top as A, B, C, D, E, F, G and H. is still relatively intact and largely archaeologically unexplored. Many Graeco-Roman tombs are documented in the tombs, it shows the mixture of the Egyptian, Hellenistic, and Roman funerary art.

The tombs are still unexplored and undocumented. The walls of the tombs are mostly divided into two registers; the upper one shows the Egyptian afterlife scenes, while the lower one shows the Classical orthostate (*opus sectile*) veins. Both the mummification and the inhumation burial practices are also attested in the tombs.

The paper examines the great heritage significance of the necropolis, its topography, the history of its investigation, as well as the special characteristics of the funerary art and burial customs in the necropolis. The tombs show the greatest number of astronomical zodiacs on its ceilings in the Egyptian necropoleis. Unfortunately, the tombs suffer from many human and environmental threats; therefore, the project aims to conduct an urgent safeguarding, first aid and virtual documentation of this tomb.

“Butchering Queens and Ailing Princesses: Saite Royal Women”

Marta Kaczanowicz, University of Warsaw

In the discussions on the role of royal women in the Late Period the recurring protagonists are the God's Wives of Amun – priestesses of the 25th and 26th dynasties who attained an unprecedented position, in many aspects equal to that of kings. However, little attention has been paid to other female members of the royal family of that time so far.

It is generally assumed that in the Late Period the position of royal wives, mothers, and daughters other than the God's Wives largely lost its previous significance, with these women no

longer represented in temples and statuary. The apparent scarcity of evidence discouraged scholars from taking an interest in the Egyptian queenship in the period between the beginning of the Kushite rule and the arrival of Alexander the Great, which resulted in very limited research on this subject. However, a more detailed investigation reveals that the image of an almost complete absence of sources is misleading. The analysis of evidence related to these women (including an intact tomb of one of the Saite queens) makes it possible to formulate more nuanced statements regarding the character of the Egyptian queenship in the discussed epoch.

This presentation aims to introduce the preliminary results of the research on the Saite royal women who did not bear the title of the God's Wife of Amun. The study is conducted within the framework of the author's investigation of the Egyptian queenship in the Late Period (ca. 747–332 BCE).

**“(...) they came north this year and bought 3 diplae of wine (...)”.
Mud stoppers and the wine trade in Late Antique Western Thebes**

Aleksandra Pawlikowska-Gwiazda University of Warsaw, The National Museum in Warsaw

The Monastery of St Phoibammon in Western Thebes was a prominent coenobitic community, founded by Abraham, the bishop of Hermonthis, during the late 6th century. Situated on the Upper Terrace of the Temple of Hatshepsut in Deir el-Bahari, it held significant historical and cultural value. Recent excavations conducted by the Polish-Egyptian Archaeological expedition have unearthed a remarkable collection of mud stoppers, which once sealed amphoras AE 7.

Despite their previous dismissal due to unattractive appearance and fragility, these Late Antique mud stoppers provide invaluable insights into the economic activities of local monastic communities. This paper presents the results of an extensive study on the mud stopper assemblage from the Monastery of St Phoibammon, shedding light on the wine trade – a vital aspect of the community's commerce.

The significance of wine in monastic life should not be overstated, as it served both liturgical and healing purposes among the monks. The demand for this commodity was substantial, creating a thriving trade network that extended beyond Theban necropolis. By analysing the seal impressions visible on the stoppers and combining this data with other sources like papyri and ostraka, we may reconstruct the connections between buyers and sellers. Through this interdisciplinary approach, this paper will provide a comprehensive view of the economic dynamics of the Monastery of St Phoibammon and its broader engagement in commercial activities during Late Antiquity.

Between the lines: the case study of tomb n. 39 in the Valley of the Queens examined in the light of unpublished archival documents

Dr. Emanuele Casini, Independent researcher

Often in unpublished archival documents it is possible to find new data that can modify the current state of knowledge concerning past discoveries. This contribution aims to present the re-contextualisation of a number of discoveries from the Valley of the Queens (Luxor, West Bank) through the examination of unpublished archaeological reports and dossiers.

From 1903 to 1905 the Valley of the Queens was investigated by the Italian Archaeological Mission (M.A.I.) directed by Ernesto Schiaparelli. However, the Italian excavation works were *de facto* conducted by Schiaparelli's right-hand man Francesco Ballerini, who had the responsibility to supervise the fieldwork in the Valley and to record the expedition's discoveries. Ballerini recorded in his excavation notes dozens of tombs – many of which were explored for the very first time – and hundreds of findings, both artifacts and human remains. Nevertheless, only a select number of tombs and findings were published [E. Schiaparelli (1924), *Esplorazione della Valle delle Regine*; F. Ballerini (1903), *Notizia sommaria degli scavi della Missione Archeologica Italiana in Egitto - anno 1903*].

Of particular interest is the case study of tomb QV 39 (QV = Queens' Valley). This tomb is not explicitly mentioned within the Italian publications, nevertheless the thorough examination of the unpublished archival documents ascertained that this tomb was explored by the M.A.I. in 1904. The intriguing aspect concerning QV 39 is that a plethora of artifacts were uncovered from that tomb, which were subsequently lost track of. In fact, the inventory list of the Museo Egizio of Turin (*Giornale d'Entrata*) does not assign any artifact to this tomb. Despite this, through the cross-examination of unpublished documents, published data, and museum artifacts it was possible to identify, with a high degree of certainty, a number of artifacts and human remains from this tomb that were wrongly assigned to other find-spots within the Valley of the Queens.

“Turn around, place yourself on the back, and be blind” or how the agency of Heka effects the victory over evil creatures

Christina Geisen, Cambridge University

The importance and influence of Heka for the creation and functioning of the world is well known. The concept is possibly most tangible for the modern scholar when it comes to magical and magico-medical spells. Here, Heka is essential for effecting the positive transformation of a dangerous situation, be it an illness that needs to be cured or a lethal animal that needs to be kept at bay. Vital for Heka's effectiveness is the interplay of the magical spell's recitation, the agency of tangible objects used during the rite, and the sacred space where it is performed.

This presentation introduces a so far unpublished stela of Horus on the crocodiles housed in the University of Cambridge's Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. The artefact is characterised by its iconographic and textual decoration which is distinctive for the object group. The magical spells written on the back, sides, and bottom of the piece are especially interesting since they feature variations and additions to the spells commonly found on these stelae, thus providing new information on the text group. The focus of the presentation lies on the agency of the object itself. The interplay of its iconography, inscriptions, and materiality creates an environment in which Heka facilitates a protective shield for the owner. By trying to see the bigger picture through the application of different approaches in the study of an artefact, such as agency, materiality, and the ontological interpretation of images chosen in this discussion, we can bring ourselves closer to understanding how the ancient Egyptians experienced their environment and tried to influence it - in this specific case the dangers inherent in the Nile and other watery bodies and the measurements taken to overcome them.

“Catch the thief!” Police iconography in private tombs from the Old to the New Kingdom

Matthieu Hagenmüller, The Sorbonne

The nature and function of Ancient Egyptian police have been the subjects of many debates among scholars, who, from Guillemette Andreu to Bernadette Mehu, have tried to understand who preserved the order in Egyptian cities and countryside. Through an overall examination of the evidence one can suggest that those we call policemen could as well be delegates from the Crown defending the law against criminals as private agents working for powerful individuals. These differences of status have consequences on their behaviour, especially as regards what they had to protect (private properties, royal goods, religious ethics, etc.). Private tombs give us an interesting view on how policemen were perceived by high-ranking tomb owners and what their social interactions were with workers and other individuals. The most numerous corpus is made of the private agents of the owner who led the inspection of workers and occasionally beat the defaulters. From the Old Kingdom date two scenes representing the arresting of a thief on a market, then police officers putting to an end to a fight in the 11th dynasty, and finally a police expedition against thieves in Akhenaten's capital. We wish to analyse these images by asking them several questions. Firstly, what was the status of the individuals engaged in these actions? Then, how were they supposed to act and how much violence was allowed? What was the purpose of such actions and how can we understand them in the light of broader social structures in Ancient Egypt? Finally, why were these scenes represented on tombs' walls and what does it tell us about their perception?

On the Source of the ΝΕΪΛΟΣ

Alessandro Piccolo, Sapienza-Università di Roma

ON THE SOURCE OF THE ΝΕΪΛΟΣ In this paper I will argue that the Greek word Νεῖλος, ‘Nile’, was derived from */nehl-/, the latter being a Canaanite term that denoted a water stream, a river valley, a trench/tunnel, a seasonal (يَدَا وَ) riverbed), and/or the Nile itself, like in Biblical/Classical Hebrew (ל נ י). This new insight would prove useful for shedding some light on the Graeco-Egyptian interactions during the Dark Age of Greece, i.e. from the early Iron Age (12th century BCE) down through the early Archaic Period (8th century BCE), a stage corresponding to the Third Intermediate Period of ancient Egypt. From the early Iron Age onwards, Phoenicia became a mercantile power in the Mediterranean. Accordingly, it is generally assumed that, from the 12th century BCE onwards, Phoenicia became a bridge between Greece and Egypt. Notably, we have evidence that the Phoenicians were apt to approach the Aegean shore to export original and imitative Egyptian objects, the so-called Aegyptiaca. In addition to these objects, the Phoenicians surely brought even Egyptian ideas, beliefs, and words to Greece. The Canaanite etymology of Νεῖλος is a powerful litmus test for grasping this “triangular dynamic”.

“The eastern door of heaven is open to you. Nut has embraced you. She whose hair is long, and whose breasts hang down”: The Embracing Arms and the Heaven’s Doors

Mennah Aly, Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities.

In the ancient Egyptian religious texts since the Old Kingdom, the sun god and the deceased are mentioned to have been embraced by divinities to guarantee their celestial ascension and rebirth after death. This idea appears in the concluding tableaux of the New Kingdom Netherworld Books which portray the solar deity elevated from the netherworld into the morning sky by pair of arms, while in tomb scenes and on the Third Intermediate Period funerary papyri and coffins, the sun disk is shown embraced by two pair of arms at its rising and setting.

Despite being attributed to deities like Nut, Shu, Nun and Tatenen; in most of the attestations, the identity of the owner of the embracing arms is kept anonymous. In fact, the depiction of the arms embracing the solar deity are associated with his *Perpetuum Mobile* across the eastern and the western horizons of the sky, and thus also related to his passage through the Doors of Heaven that gives access to these two horizons. Given to their protective role and secretive nature, the Doors of Heaven were almost concealed rather than appearing as mere portals, while their existence was denoted to in various themes, among which is the embracing arms.

The research shows how the arms embracing the solar deity in the solar rising and setting scenes are not only associated with the opening of the Doors of Heaven, but also substitute them in their role of separating between the different realms of the universe. Furthermore, the paper investigates the identity of the owners of these embracing arms, either deities or gatekeepers, and how through embracing the sun god, they evoke the primeval moment of creation that entails his emergence from the Unified Darkness; a course repeated with every solar rising.

Blindness in the Ebers Papyrus: A New Interpretation of the Term špt.

Silvia Nigrelli, Brown University

The section on eye remedies in the Ebers papyrus contains several treatments for *špt*, a medical condition traditionally translated as ‘blindness’. However, some of these treatments were deemed as ‘really excellent’ by the Egyptian doctors and would work immediately. The translation of *špt* as blindness is thus not feasible, given the potential for instant healing and impermanence of this ailment.

In this paper I examine the various contexts of *šp*, the base verb from which *špt* has been derived, including literary compositions, tomb inscriptions, and religious texts. I also consider the descriptions of the symptoms and the efficacy of individual ingredients in treating *špt* in order to ascertain its actual meaning. I will show that the translations of *šp* as ‘be blind’ and *špt* as ‘blindness’ are incorrect, while suggesting new readings of these words. This will help us not only to better comprehend the treatments for this condition in the Ebers papyrus, which were in fact

practical, efficient, and quick working, but also to refine our reading and comprehension of the literary passages where *šp* occurs. We will thus be able to better appreciate the ancient Egyptians' understanding of visual impairment and its expression in the written language.

Lower Nubia from Chiefdom to State: The Development of A-Horizon Royalty and its Relations with Early Egypt Through the Analysis of the Cemeteries of Sayala and Qustul

Ilaria Sieli, Università degli Studi di Milano

This contribution is extrapolated from wider research, focused on the A-Horizon civilisation in Lower Nubia and its relations with Proto-Dynastic Egypt, through the analysis of two main Nubian necropolises: cemetery 137 of Sayala (and the associated Cemetery 142 of Naga Wadi) and cemetery L of Qustul, respectively belonging to Classical and Terminal A-Horizon, both pertaining to the main centre of a sub-regional or cantonal political entity. Lower Nubia is an interface area between two different cultures, which followed diverse paths during the crucial ages of the State formation, subjected to creolisation and hybridisation phenomena. Excavations in the region have mostly been conceived in the framework of salvage archaeology, due to the threat of flooding Lower Nubia underwent since the Aswan Dam was built in 1902; despite the attempts to develop a scientific method to approach the excavations while struggling with water rising, which however led to quantum increases in our knowledge of cultural history of the whole area and its cultural facies, still enormous lacunae remain: the current state of research suffers from a general lack of data and the impossibility to reprise the excavations in most sites, which are now submerged by Lake Nasser – like Sayala and Qustul.

This contribution approaches the topic from two main standpoints: first, an overall introduction on A-Horizon culture and its relations with Proto-Dynastic Egypt from the socio-economic point of view will be highlighted. Then, the analysis of both Sayala and Qustul's cemeteries will be outlined, displaying both similarities and differences in the development of funerary customs as a reflection of social dynamics.

The following section will retrace the commercial and political interactions between the two Nubian chiefdoms and the rising Egyptian élite, and its consequences on both social and ideological aspects. The conclusions will analyse the development of chiefdoms in Lower Nubia and their attempts to reach a status of kingship, with the purpose to explain why Lower Nubia cantonal proto-states never fully developed as mature and formed statal entities like the Egyptian Crown, by providing hypothesis on a revision of the A-Horizon cultural context.

Of Ibises and Baboons: the acquisition and breeding of sacred animals at North Saqqara

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The Sacred Animal Necropolis at North Saqqara occupies a central place in studies of Late Period – early Roman animal cults in Egypt. It is known for its vast subterranean catacombs containing mummified cows, ibises, falcons, baboons, dogs and cats, each of which was sacred to its respective deity. The volume of mummified remains, particularly ibises which were deposited in their thousands and baboons which were not native to Egypt, invites the question of how such creatures were acquired by the local priesthoods.

Synthesising both archaeological and historical evidence, this paper offers an overview of how ibises and baboons may have arrived at North Saqqara for eventual mummification. It explores the suggestion that there was an active effort to breed ibises in the immediate area, possibly involving the incubation of eggs in temple structures. Limited epigraphic evidence also indicates that baboons may have been bred at Memphis, but most would seem to have been imported from southern lands via the Nile or the Red Sea. The evidence for this southern trade, particularly from the contemporary kingdoms of Kush (present-day Sudan) and proto-Aksum (present-day Ethiopia and Eritrea) is also reviewed.

Looking for Mutemwia (i)

Deborah Sweeney, Tel Aviv University

Mutemwia (i) was the wife of the scribe Ramose (i), the scribe of the royal tomb-builders' village Deir el-Medīna between years 5 and 39 of Ramesses II. Ramose was one of the richest and most successful officials in the community's history – he supervised the building of Ramesses' own tomb, the massive tomb KV 5 of his sons, and several tombs in the Valley of the Queens, including the beautiful tomb of Nefertari, and built three tombs at Deir el-Medīna for himself and his dependants.

Ramose's life is very well-documented, but Mutemwia is a more shadowy figure; she is included on two votive stelae with him, in their family tombs and the tombs of a couple of friends and relatives, and in a few other inscriptions. No documents or sources which she generated in her own right have survived, we do not know when she was born or died, and her body has not been identified. Her situation is fairly typical of the women of Deir el-Medīna, who are not mentioned in the administrative records of the tomb-building process, appeared less often in legal and business texts from the village, and whose husbands and brothers occupied more important places in tombs and on stelae.

What can be known of Mutemwia, and of her lived experience? What could it have been like to be married to a local leader so rich and so successful - but whose personal life was overshadowed by his inability to beget children?

This lecture will attempt to reconstruct Mutemwia's life, using genealogical material from Deir el-Medīna, experimental archaeology from other ancient Egyptian sites, and ethnological parallels. Looking at Mutemwia's life via the events which took place during her lifetime, and the people with whom she interacted, will help us to understand her life better.

The Widow's Lament: Mourning Women in Ancient Egyptian Funerary Rituals

Ariadne Argyros, Durham University

Well-attested since the Old Kingdom period, ancient Egyptian funerary rituals were performed on the body and soul of the dead to open the way for a second, eternal life in the hereafter. Previous scholarship indicates that these rites contained a codified structure of roughly consistent verbal and gesticulatory behaviours that were expressed through stylised and repetitive performance. Supporting evidence for this argument is embodied by mourning women, a pair or group of lamenters who executed their roles for the dead perfectly to ensure the ritual's success. Their typical violent, chaotic gestures and wailing laments served both protective and regenerative functions that granted these women enormous power to assist in the transition of the dead into a form of being that allowed them to endure for eternity.

Past scholars have determined the most frequent gestures of raising the hands in front of the face, torn clothes, and falling to the ground in visceral anguish. However, certain iconographic gestures such as the baring of their breasts or scratching their cheeks have been reduced to inconsequential by-products of grief or sanctioned depravity. My initial research suggests that these acts subtly exemplified women's dominant role in mourning. The supposed "impurity" of nudity and blood actually may have served to visually draw attention to the fertile value of the female body as a way to underscore their revitalising function within this liminal space. By harnessing and channelling their actions and emotions correctly, these mourners helped maintain world order and imbued a sense of hope and security into what would otherwise have been a wholly dangerous and sorrowful affair. Their actions ensured that evil could be overcome and the deceased, now revived, was properly equipped to journey into the afterlife as an *ʿḥ*, a 'blessed one'.

Beyond Grave Concubines: Redefining the Narrative and Unravelling the Complex Symbolism of 'Isis-Aphrodite' Terracotta Figures in Greco-Roman Egypt

Shelby Navone, Durham University

This research expands the biographies of nude 'Isis-Aphrodite' terracotta figurines from Greco-Roman Egypt through a meticulous examination of 19 figurines, considering their iconography, archaeological context, and historical records. Reassessing traditional perspectives, the study proposes a comprehensive interpretation highlighting their connections with the Ptolemies, Dionysus, Aphrodite, and ancient Egyptian fertility rites within funerary contexts. Drawing upon diverse theoretical frameworks, museum catalogues, and site reports, the research employs interdisciplinary approaches to explore ancient embodiment, representation, and the interplay of cultural traditions. By unravelling the intricate details and cultural context of these figurines, it sheds light on ancient Egyptian religious beliefs surrounding the goddess Isis and offers insights into multi-cultural Ancient Egypt. By employing quantitative analyses from the onset, a clearer understanding emerges regarding the potential intended uses of these figurines. This research is grounded in a timely discussion surrounding our understanding of ancient bodies, gender dynamics, and the need to reexamine historical narratives.

Construction of the Cosmos: Developing the Iconography of Astronomy in the Predynastic Period

Elizabeth Learning, University of Auckland, New Zealand

While multiple theories of state formation exist within Egyptology, universally acknowledged among them is the fact that the development of a cohesive state requires the concurrent development of an iconographic toolkit. Incorporating elements such as the narrative of kingship, the cosmology of elites, and the conventions of representation, this iconography formed the groundwork for the visual representation of concepts and ideas throughout ancient Egyptian history.

This presentation considers three predynastic artefacts and their role in shaping the iconography of astronomy in ancient Egypt: the Gerzeh meteoric iron beads, the Abu Zaidan ritual knife (Brooklyn Museum 09.889.118), and the ivory hair comb decorated with rows of wild animals (MET 30.8.224). Although the earliest explicit narrative reference to a meteorite does not occur until the Middle Kingdom, and the term *biA n pt* ("iron of the sky") does not appear until the late Eighteenth Dynasty, the earliest example of the material being used comes from the Naqada II Gerzeh cemetery. Likewise, though astronomical knowledge would not be communicated in a codified form until the Pyramid Texts of the Old Kingdom, stars were already appearing in a recognisable form in the comb and ritual knife of Naqada III. Furthermore, both of these objects portray stars in their recognisable 5-pointed form.

As such, these three examples of Predynastic iconographic development represent the early formalisations of astronomical artistic convention in ancient Egypt. They show that interactions with celestial objects – both tangibly through meteorites and artistically through stars – were integrating into the iconographic toolkit of ancient Egypt. Ultimately, this presentation concludes that the groundwork for later artistic and literary conventions of ancient Egyptian astronomy was being established in the Predynastic Period, and that objects such as those discussed are evidence of a rich astronomical tradition.

Frontality and dance in New Kingdom art

Miriam Bueno Guardia, Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED), Spain

Frontality in Egyptian art is presented as an exception. When this frontal perspective appears in dance and music scenes, it has been traditionally understood as a way of expression of the movement of the figures. However, after an extensive study of New Kingdom dance scenes, we can see that it is, as in the rest of artistic themes, something exceptional: only 2.54% of the scenes include a figure with a face represented frontally. Furthermore, if we analyse these figures, we can discard the idea of transmission of dynamism because of their poses.

The three scenes found and analysed in this paper belong to the decoration of private Theban tombs dating from between the reigns of Amenhotep II and Amenhotep III, but they could also have other common characteristics that will be analysed here.

On the one hand, I will analyse the dance scenes that include frontal representations at an iconographic level and in the context of the decoration of the tomb. On the other hand, I will extract their common characteristics, and I will explain the possible role of this innovative artistic resource in New Kingdom Egyptian art, linked more to the message and symbolism that these scenes want to convey than to the idea of movement.

An Egyptian House in a Canaanite City: Building 1500 at Beth-Shean in Light of New Kingdom Egyptian Cultural Identity

Krystal V. L. Pierce, Brigham Young University

The Iron Age IA Building 1500 at Beth-Shean in Canaan has been given various domestic, political, and martial labels, including a patrician house, ceremonial palace, administrative building, and troop headquarters. Based on hieroglyphic inscriptions discovered at Beth-Shean, it has been assumed that the structure was the personal home of the Egyptian bureaucrat and military officer Ramses-user-khepesheh, whose name appears on several stone architectural elements at the site, although none were actually discovered inside Building 1500. Even though there are several different functions assigned to this building, many agree with the classification of certain architectural aspects and construction techniques as Egyptian or Egyptian-style, including the layout, walls, door jambs, and columns. On the other hand, some features, like the entrance, foundations, and stories, are stated to be non-Egyptian in nature. These designations are based almost entirely on architectural features, with no examination or recognition of the objects discovered inside, and little discussion of actual comparanda in contemporary Egypt.

This paper will analyse the architectural features, construction techniques, and objects discovered in Building 1500 and will compare and contrast them with Egyptian domestic architecture of the New Kingdom in light of Egyptian dogma and praxis regarding residences. A theoretical framework based on cultural identity will be used to analyse the context and employment of spatiality and materiality in the structure, which demonstrates the social relationships that actively create and maintain cultural identity. This includes an examination of architectural facets like spatial-divisioning, accessibility, and functionality, but also an analysis of rooms, including shape/size, walls/floors, thresholds, furnishings, and objects discovered inside, as well as proposed proprietors of the space according to gender, age, socio-economic status, and occupation. This investigation into the cultural patterning of spatiality, materiality, and identity will establish how a New Kingdom Egyptian would have functioned as a resident of Building 1500, and how similarities or variations between the structure and houses in the Egyptian homeland would have determined or affected life abroad in Canaan.

Up for grabs? The Levant between Egypt and Babylonia at the fall of Assyria (630–567 BCE)

Jinyan Wang, University of Toronto

Along with the fall of the Neo-Assyrian empire at the end of the seventh century BCE, its provincial system in the Levant was dissolved. Decades later, the Levant was under the control of the Babylonians and the Neo-Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar II, made two attempts to invade Egypt, in 601 and 567 BCE.

Recent studies of this transition from Assyrian to Babylonian dominion in the Levant have recognised the persistent and impactful effort by Egypt to counter the advance of the Babylonians. Following these studies, this presentation understands this transition as a dynamic power struggle, which involved three parties: the hegemonic powers of Egypt and Babylonia and the local elites. Combining contemporary sources from Egypt, Babylonia, and the Hebrew Bible, as well as historiography from the Greek and Roman periods, this presentation provides a comprehensive and balanced picture of Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of the Levant.
