





Detail of painted relief from the false door of Rahotep. From Meidum, 4th dynasty (EA 1242). Part of new display in Egyptian Sculpture Gallery (Room 4).

Foreword Welcome

Neal Spencer

Keeper, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan,
British Museum

Egypt and Sudan have been particularly prominent in the public spaces of the British Museum this last year. *Ancient lives, new discoveries* presented well-known mummies in a new way, to reflect ancient lived experience rather than death. Its popularity led to an extended 14-month run. Five other exhibitions on Egypt and Sudan will take place in 2015. Most notably, an exhibition on post-pharaonic Egypt, exploring the Jewish, Islamic and Christian communities between 30 BC and AD 1171, will emphasise that the Museum is a place where Egypt of all periods is represented by objects. Meanwhile, a new display of Early Egypt opened in Room 64, all of the panel and label text in the famous Egyptian Sculpture Gallery (Room 4) has been updated, and new displays on Kerma and Kush grace the Sudan, Egypt and Nubia gallery (Room 65). Underpinning all these galleries and exhibitions is the documentation and conservation of the collection, such as the surveys of Late Antique textiles and stonework, or the documentation of faience figurines and glass jewellery. Very unusually, this year saw an important statue added to the collection, that of a Medjau and lector-priest.

Fieldwork in Egypt and Sudan is also not restricted to the pharaonic, with Roberta Tomber's work at Berenike shedding light on a community familiar with writing, objects and ideas from the Mediterranean to India. The research projects at Dangeil, Amara West and the Dongola Reach are now supported through the framework of the Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project. Such fieldwork is shedding further light on the cultural entanglement of Egypt and Nubia, while also considering how specific histories are presented to local audiences.

Many of the projects presented here reflect collaboration with other museums and universities, ensuring innovative, interdisciplinary research – from the University of Durham to the Swiss Institute of Architectural and Archaeological Research in Cairo, and beyond. This newsletter also highlights three (of the many) scholars benefitting from access to the British Museum's collection, which is available through the online database. The Museum is one of the leading institutions developing Open Source semantic web software for research purposes, notably through ResearchSpace (researchspace.org), and the Trismegistos portal for papyri from Egypt (trismegistos.org) now features links directly to the British Museum's collection database.

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Exhibitions and galleries

Gallery of Early Egypt: a desert enigma

Renée Friedman

Heagy Research Curator of Early Egypt, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

On 9 July 2014, a complete redisplay opened in the Raymond and Beverly Sackler Gallery of Early Egypt (Room 64), illustrating the development of, and influences on, early Egyptian culture from the Late Palaeolithic to the construction of Egypt's first pyramid in the early Third Dynasty – from around 11,000 to 2680 BC. This complicated and long story prompted the creation of the largest timeline in the Museum!

The function and usage of most of the objects, if not their full meaning to their owners, can be determined from context, but some remain tantalisingly obscure, none more so than the Clayton rings. These conical cylinders of pottery, named after the desert explorer P A Clayton (1896–1962), form a functional set with perforated pottery discs that are always just slightly larger than the ring's smaller opening, but do not fit as lids. Often found in desert caches, they seem to be matched sets, all of the same size and probably made by the same potter. Some are finely burnished, others poorly made or even cut down from a recycled Egyptian pot. The discs can be custom made or reworked from a potsherd, but the perforation in the centre is always 1.5cm in diameter. As these discs broke more often than the rings, spares were often made. Neither the rings nor the discs show signs of exposure to fire or intense heat, and contents have never been found within them, so their function remains unknown.

The discovery of Clayton rings and discs, deposited in caches dating from at least 1,000 years after the Sahara had turned from savannah to desert, across the arid wilderness from the Libyan border to the Red Sea and south into northern Sudan, comes as a surprise. Often carefully placed in rock shelters or at the base of hillocks, apparently awaiting their owner's return, many, like the example on display, are incised with signs – ownership was important. The majority of caches contained between one and ten ring and disc ensembles, though the largest cache contained 36 rings and discs carefully stacked and placed on their sides.

So what were people doing in the desert and why did they go to the trouble to take out and leave behind Clayton rings (only three have been found in the Nile Valley)? There is no definitive answer to either of these questions, but there are clues. We know that the nomadic herders living in the Dakhla Oasis at this time, called the Sheikh Muftah culture, both made and used Clayton rings. They have been found in the oasis, around seasonal hunting and herding camps, but also in caches up to 300km away from permanent water sources, and beyond the safe roaming range of any herdsman or hunter. The range of styles and fabrics shows that the rings were not restricted to the Dakhla culture alone, but were also made and used by travellers from other cultures in Nubia and the Eastern Desert.

Many suggestions for their function have been put forward – cheese production, salt collection, bird traps, beehives, water collectors, utensils for making fire, lamps, ovens for roasting the seeds of bitter gourds, or even as maggot farms. No explanation is as yet completely convincing. Whatever the case, Clayton rings and discs appear to be an innovation

that made life in the arid desert possible and facilitated wide ranging trade interactions. They remain an enigma, but through them we can catch a rare glimpse of the other peoples and cultures living in Egypt with whom the Egyptians along the Nile interacted during the formative period of the early dynasties.

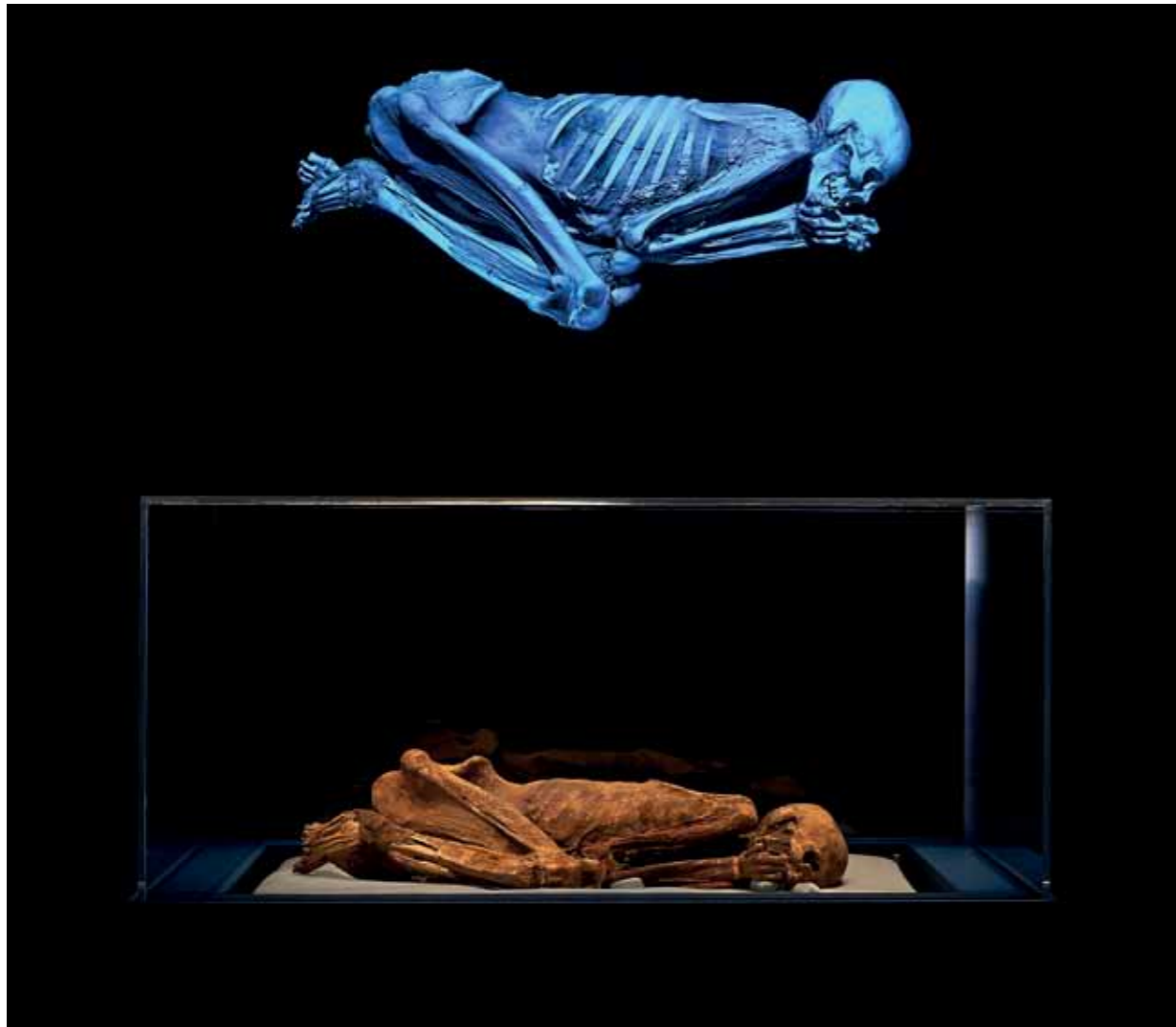
British Museum research on Early Egypt is made possible through the generosity of Mr Thomas C Heagy and Mrs Linda Heagy. The new display was made possible by the Raymond and Beverly Sackler Foundation.



Raymond and Beverly Sackler Gallery of Early Egypt (Room 64).

Clayton ring and disks, now on display in the Raymond and Beverly Sackler Gallery of Early Egypt (Room 64).

Exhibitions and galleries
Ancient lives, new discoveries



John Taylor, Daniel Antoine and Marie Vandenneusch
 Curators, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

The exhibition *Ancient lives, new discoveries* opened on 22 May 2014, featuring eight mummified bodies from the British Museum's collection, spanning over four millennia and various sites in the Nile Valley. The exhibition uses state-of-the-art CT scanning and visualisation technology to reveal what lies beneath the wrappings. Each mummy is presented in a separate space and accompanied by large HD screens which show astonishingly clear images of the bodies and the objects which accompany them. A key aim in developing the exhibition was to explain how scientists can learn about past societies from the study of mummified human remains, but without subjecting them to the destructive and irreversible process of unwrapping. At the same time we have tried to focus on presenting insights into their individual lives by revealing aspects of their appearance, such as hairstyles, evidence for their age at death and the diseases from which they may have suffered. Equally important was the intention to give the public the opportunity to participate in the process of discovery through a simple touch-pad interface, enabling each visitor to make a personal exploration of the CT scan visualisations.

The exhibition has been accompanied by a range of interviews and blog posts on the website which give different perspectives on the content. These are not just the views of Egyptologists and scientists but those of people from other disciplines – a dentist comments on ancient Egyptian oral hygiene, while a tattoo artist considers the significance of body art in the distant past and the present. The public programme has encompassed sleepovers for children, a workshop on what can be learned from the analysis of a skeleton, and public lectures by leading experts, including Renée Friedman on the beginnings of Egyptian mummification, Joel Irish on the population biology of the ancient Nile Valley, and Anders Persson and Anders Ynnerman on the exciting new possibilities that the latest CT scan visualisation techniques are opening up. During an evening lecture, the exhibition curators staged a live demonstration of the software used to investigate the scans of the mummies, manipulating and exploring the raw CT data in real time on screen, an innovative session revealing the research techniques that lie behind the exhibition.

Reviews of the exhibition have been overwhelmingly positive and visitors have commented on the effectiveness of the technology, while recognising that the inclusion of the screens is not intended as an end in itself but as a tool to facilitate understanding. In response to the fantastic public interest, the exhibition has been extended beyond its original 6-month run, to 12 July. Meanwhile research continues on the mummies at the British Museum. Thanks to the ongoing cooperation with the Royal Brompton Hospital, more CT scans are planned, using the latest dual energy CT scanners, delivering data which can be segmented to produce crystal-clear images of the remains on which even the smallest features can be scrutinised. More new discoveries can be expected, as we continue to build up a fuller picture of ancient lives and experiences.

The exhibition runs until 12 July 2015. For more information, visit britishmuseum.org/ancientlives

*Exhibition sponsored by Julius Baer
 Technology partner Samsung*



Cartonnage case of Tjayasetimu, c. 800 BC (EA 20744).

Views of the exhibition (from top): Predynastic mummy from Gebelein, three funerary masks, and interactive screens to explore new discoveries.

Exhibitions and galleries

Egypt mirror to the world: Jews, Christians and Muslims from the Roman to Fatimid periods



Work on paper depicting a battle between Arabs and Franks. From Fustat, Egypt, c. AD 1160. (ME 1938,0312,0.1)

Wall-painting depicting the three Hebrews with the angel in the fiery furnace framed by SS Cosmas and Damian and their three brothers, who were martyred together with their mother Theodote. From near Wadi Sarga, Egypt, around the 6th century AD (EA 73139).



Elisabeth R O'Connell

Curator, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

In the course of the first millennium AD, the successive introduction of two new faiths transformed the traditional polytheistic world of the Roman Empire into a Christian Roman empire and, later, in the eastern and southern territories of the former Roman empire and Sasanian Iran, to Islamic caliphates. Both Christianity and Islam were heirs to, and developed from, Judaism, which itself underwent significant changes in the same period. Each of these three world religions descended from Abraham, shared their devotion to his one God and the priority of scripture – the Jewish Bible, the Christian Bible and the Qur'an.

In addition to the usual range of stone architectural elements and stelae, metalwork, pottery and glass, the arid climate of Egypt also preserves organic material such as wooden architectural elements, ivory and bone fittings, textile garments and soft furnishings, papyri, parchment and paper. Egypt was the 'breadbasket' of successive empires and a major source of goods and materials, while also being the location of one of the most important cities in the Mediterranean world – first Alexandria, then Cairo. As such Egypt can provide unparalleled access to Jewish, Christian and Muslim communities and individuals in this formative period of world history.

Basalt head of Germanicus, grandson-in-law and great-nephew of the emperor Augustus, the forehead of which was later incised with a cross by Christians. From Egypt, c. AD 19 (G&R 1872,0605.1).



A forthcoming exhibition at the British Museum will explore the development and, in time, coexistence of the three major monotheistic faiths, revealing political, social, religious and artistic interrelationships and illuminating their connections both to the more ancient past and Egypt today. Focusing on Egypt from the Roman to Fatimid periods, the exhibition will address intermittent interfaith tension and violence as well as long periods of peaceful coexistence between 30 BC and AD 1171.

The exhibition is a collaboration between the British Museum and the Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin (SMB). The exhibition, entitled Ein Gott - Abrahams Erben am Nil Juden, Christen und Muslime in Ägypten von der Antike bis zum Mittelalter, is on view at the Bode-Museum in Berlin, from 2 April to 13 September 2015. The British Museum exhibition, from 29 October 2015 to 14 February 2016, is generously supported by the Blavatnik Family Foundation.



The collection
The African Rock Art image project



Elizabeth Galvin
Curator, Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas

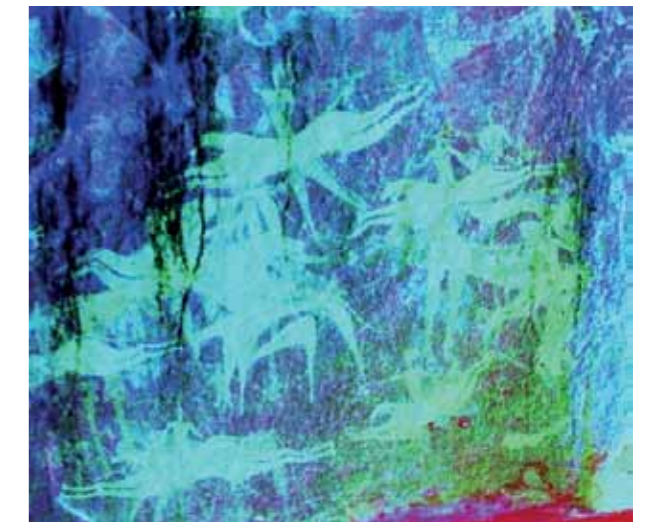
In 2013 the British Museum acquired a collection of around 25,000 digital photographs of rock art from the Trust for African Rock Art (TARA) in Nairobi, spanning 19 countries across Africa and rock art from thousands of years ago up to recent times. Remote rock art sites are susceptible to damage and destruction by both natural and manmade events – these photographs are a valuable record for future researchers.

The current five-year research project aims to catalogue the photographs, and make them available online. We are proceeding geographically, having started in northern Africa – all of the images from Egypt, Sudan, Libya, Algeria and Morocco are now online. The subjects of these images are incredibly varied, both in style and time period, and range from now-extinct buffalo engravings, through to horse paintings with Libyan-Berber script, to depictions of pastoral life. In addition to creating the database, the project team has made a dedicated website to allow visitors to explore the collection and gain further information, with introductory articles, online exhibitions and interactive maps.

The images from Egypt and Sudan consist largely of rock paintings from the Gilf Kebir plateau in south-west Egypt and the Jebel Uweinat massif which straddles the borders of Egypt, Libya and Sudan. The photographs depict rock paintings and engravings, probably dating from between the fifth and first millennia BC, although there are some

engravings that may be older. The engravings are mainly figurative images of large mammals, particularly giraffes and antelope, while the paintings are overwhelmingly of domestic cattle or people. As such, the images are a fascinating resource for investigating the period of early pastoralism in the Sahara.

The rock art in these areas was relatively unknown to European academics prior to the 20th century and generally remains quite inaccessible. This in itself adds great interest to the collection – the discovery and exploration of these sites in the pre-war years, by figures such as the explorer Ralph Bagnold, Abbé Breuil, and László Almásy, attracted attention. Almásy was the 'English Patient' from the book and film, which feature a fictional version of one of the most renowned sites documented in the TARA collection, the so-called 'Cave of Swimmers' in Egypt. This site, situated in Wadi Sura – which translates as 'valley of the paintings' – has intrigued many scholars and visitors for years, with its depictions of humans with their limbs outstretched as if they were swimming. However, it is not just the 'swimmers' that adorn the cave. There are also meticulously painted human figures complete with intricate jewellery and body adornments as well as an engraved antelope's hoof print. Perhaps one of the most striking and intriguing images from this site are the simple negative handprints that are situated between the various figures. These were created by blowing pigment over one's hand against the rock wall.



The variety of engravings and paintings of Sudan's rock art at Jebel Uweinat are a glimpse into the transitory nature of the people and animals that inhabited this landscape. Herds of giraffes are engraved on rocks nearby paintings of human figures tending to their cattle. Camels, dogs and antelope are met with hieroglyphic inscriptions, showing how various peoples used this rocky outcrop, over thousands of years, to leave their mark and depict the life around them.

The project team is using new technologies to research and study rock art, for example photo manipulation and filter software on rock art, that has faded revealing details that were invisible to the naked eye. New images, research and articles are being continually added to the website. We are currently working on the collections from Chad, Niger and Mauritania before moving to the eastern African collections, and finishing with southern Africa in 2016 and 2017.

For further information, visit britishmuseum.org/africanrockart or follow Elizabeth on Twitter: @LisaGalvin_BM

The African rock art image project is supported by the Arcadia Fund.

Previous page:
Wadi el-Obeiyd,
Western Desert,
Egypt. © TARA/
David Coulson.

Panel from
the 'Cave of
Swimmers', Wadi
Sura, Egypt.
Swimming figures
are depicted on
the top centre-
right as well as the
lower centre-left of
the image, along
with several other
human figures.
© TARA/David
Coulson.

Roof of a rock
shelter, Karkur
Talh, Jebel
Uweinat, Sudan.
© TARA/David
Coulson.

Rock art from
Ennedi Plateau,
Chad. Original
(left) and filtered
(right) image.
© TARA/David
Coulson.

Collection

New acquisition: the statue of Neb-hepet-Ra

Marcel Marée

Curator, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

The British Museum has acquired a highly important statue of serpentine, preserved to a height of 19.5cm. In 1910 it was bought in Egypt for the Art Institute in Chicago, then deaccessioned in 1958, passing through private hands until it resurfaced last year. In May it deservedly returns to the public domain, in the Egyptian Sculpture Gallery (Room 4). Representing a man with shaven head, dressed in a long wraparound garment, the man stands in prayer with his arms hanging down, the hands resting flat on the front of his robe. The owner's aged and naturalistic features, his large ears and details of his clothing all date it to the final decades of the 12th Dynasty (second half of the 19th century BC).

No doubt the statue once stood in a tomb chapel in western Thebes. Inscribed on every available surface, the hieroglyphs not only present the standard offering prayers but also reveal the man's exceptional career. Enter 'the senior lector in the King's House, master of secrets in the August Chamber, pure of hands in performing rituals, the lector Neb-hepet-Ra, born of Sit-Amun'. The personal name is rare and was inspired by the throne name of Neb-hepet-Ra Montuhotep II, a venerated king who had founded the Middle Kingdom some 250 years earlier, reuniting the country and ending a time of political fragmentation. His mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri was an architectural gem in the cityscape of ancient Thebes, and for centuries the king would be invoked on local private monuments. People named after him came typically from families that helped maintain the priestly services at the temple, and the owner of this statue was surely no exception. Indeed a 'senior lector' Neb-hepet-Ra left graffiti in the hills south of the temple – quite possibly the same man.

Lectors were religious scholars with knowledge of rituals and sacred texts. They also held expertise in the rules and iconography that governed formal art, as employed on sacred monuments. Apart from their priestly duties, the lectors directed the content and layout of artistic representations on the walls of temples and tombs, and many even doubled as draughtsmen. Neb-hepet-Ra states that he was a senior lector 'in the King's House', so he undoubtedly frequented the palace in Thebes. His easy access to the king of his day, almost certainly Amenemhat III, made him a leading advisor in matters of religious culture. Neb-hepet-Ra would have played a key role in the proper completion of royal commissions, liaising between the pharaoh and groups of draughtsmen and sculptors.

Perhaps the most interesting element in the statue's inscriptions is the autobiographical statement found on the back pillar: 'The lector Neb-hepet-Ra says: "I am a Medjau in Ipsetsut (the temple of Amun-Ra in Karnak) and a lector"'. The Medjau were police tasked with the security of desert roads and that of cemeteries and temples. Originally the term Medjau had ethnic significance, denoting a nomadic people that lived in the eastern desert of Nubia and often recruited into Egypt's security forces, in part to patrol the deserts they knew so well. The statue shows that already in the 19th century BC, much earlier than previously thought, the term had broadened to mean any desert police, including Egyptians. From Neb-hepet-Ra's name, high status and literacy it is clear that he would have been of Egyptian birth, not of nomadic origins. The statue also offers evidence,

not previously available, for Medjau staff employed at the wealthy temple of Amun-Ra in Karnak. Last but not least, the texts are unique in documenting policing and priestly duties combined in one individual. Egyptian statues do not normally bear autobiographical statements, but Neb-hepet-Ra was determined to record the unusual fact, defying customary practice and spatial limitations.

The sides of the back pillar bear offering prayers invoking Osiris, the god of death and rebirth, and more unusually the war god 'Montu, lord of Medamud'. The town of Medamud lies just north of ancient Thebes and we may safely conclude that there, as well, Neb-hepet-Ra had duties to fulfil. At Medamud, the kings of the late 12th and early 13th Dynasties made many contributions to the temple of Montu, and Neb-hepet-Ra may well have been involved in the execution of its decoration programme.

The acquisition of this statue by the British Museum has restored to fame a remarkable man, whose colourful life and career appear before us with unusual clarity. The comments above only begin to describe the wealth of insights this little masterpiece affords and a full publication is being prepared.

Acquired with the assistance of the Art Fund (with a contribution from The Wolfson Foundation) and the Patrons of the Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan.



Statue of Neb-hepet-Ra, late 12th Dynasty (EA 83921).

Collection

Islamic stelae from Aswan

Mahmoud Hawari

Curator, Department of the Middle East

Among the Islamic stelae (tombstones) in the British Museum is a group of 16 sandstone stelae from Aswan in Upper Egypt which were acquired for the Museum in 1887 by Ernest Wallis Budge. In the winter of 1887, torrential rain and floods struck Aswan causing severe damage to the main cemetery of the town and a large number of tombstones were swept away. About 1,500 intact stelae and about 500 fragments can be attributed to the site – some were transferred to the Aswan Museum, and the majority to the Islamic Museum of Cairo. Several others were acquired by museums around the world, including the British Museum.

Throughout the first centuries of Islam until the first half of the 11th century AD, the town of Aswan in Upper Egypt developed into an important Islamic political, trading and learning centre, reaching prominence in the Fatimid period. It was a major station on the *hajj* route to the holy cities of Hijaz, particularly for pilgrims from Egypt and North Africa. The large cemetery of the city, known as the Fatimid cemetery, actually contains tomb monuments dating to the Umayyad and Tulunid dynasties (mid-7th to late 9th century AD). Since 2006, it has been the subject of conservation and study by the German Archaeological Institute in Cairo.

The Fatimid tombstones (stelae) from Aswan reveal a high standard of craftsmanship and aesthetic splendour. They are inscribed in a simple Arabic angular script known as kufic, which from the late 8th and early 9th century AD was increasingly embellished with foliate terminals and plaited letters, including various decorative devices, such as a hook, arc or palmette. The calligraphy is characterised by clarity of the letter forms and spacing between the lines and the words.

Each tombstone bears an inscription with the name of the deceased and, usually, their date of death, sometimes providing valuable social and historical information – profession, place of origin, and to which class and sect of Islam he or she belongs. Each inscription follows a standard formula, beginning with the invocation 'in the name of God' (the *basmalah*). This is followed by a set introductory phrase, either in the form of familiar Qur'anic verses – thanks to God (*hamdalah*), the benediction on the Prophet Muhammad (*tasliya*), a tradition of the Prophet Muhammad (*hadith*) – or sometimes a freely composed phrase or invocation. The name of the deceased comes next with his/her genealogy, titles, and sometimes profession. The name is preceded by the phrase 'this is the grave of' (*hadha qabr*). Many stelae end with a precise date of death.



Tombstone of Fatima, dated AH 443/AD 1052. From Aswan (ME 1887.0402.1447).

The collection

Colourful glass adornments from Egypt: an 18th Dynasty enigma



Anna Hodgkinson

Research Fellow, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

The 18th Dynasty, c. 1545–1290 BC, is renowned for the quality of glass production, particularly vessels such as the famous fish (EA 55193) from Amarna. My fellowship at the British Museum allowed a less well-known group of glass objects from this period – often called ear-plugs or ‘ear-studs’ – to be studied. These small objects resemble

mushroom- or papyrus-shaped ear-studs depicted on tomb scenes and mummy cartonnages, but all the examples in the British Museum have a small hole running through the centre of the object! Over 100 years ago, Flinders Petrie and bead specialist Horace C Beck called them beads or amulets, because of this piercing.

The objects were produced by wrapping molten glass canes around a metal rod. However, this procedure would not have necessitated a complete piercing. Some have suggested that the – rather unattractive – frontal hole, which would be visible if these items were worn through a pierced earlobe, may have accommodated a fresh flower. While this is possible, I would rather interpret these items as beads, since most of them have a beautiful spiral-decorated shaft that would have been invisible when worn through the earlobe. The beads could have been threaded horizontally or vertically, worn in collars or on the ends of wigs.

Unfortunately, no pictorial or three-dimensional evidence informs us how these objects were worn, nor do the archaeological contexts tell us much about their use. Most have been found individually, rather than in pairs, and those that appear on the art market and in private collections are usually unprovenanced.

My time in the British Museum has allowed documentation of 240 glass jewellery items of the New Kingdom. The descriptions and measurements, with full photographic documentation, are accessible online at britishmuseum.org/collection

Fellowships are made possible through the support of the patrons of the Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan.



Anna preparing the glass adornments for photography.

A selection of beads from the British Museum's collection.

The collection

CT scanning crocodiles

Simon Prentice

Museum Assistant, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

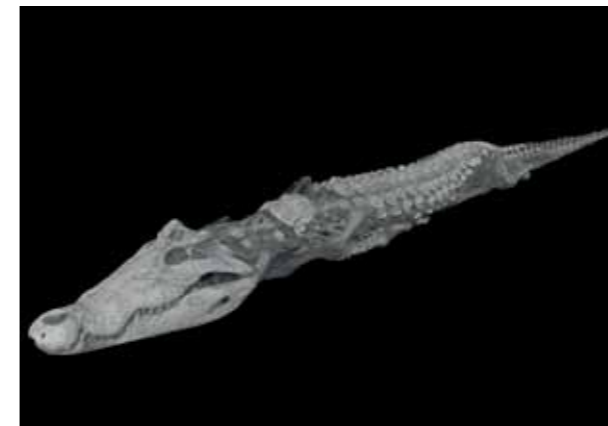
My colleagues and I are quite accustomed to taking human mummies to hospital for CT scans, for example in preparation for the exhibition *Ancient lives, new discoveries*. A more daunting challenge came when Curator Julie Anderson requested that the enormous, bitumen-coated, crocodile – a long-term resident of the Organics Store – be scanned. The crocodile, most likely from the temple at Kom Ombo and dating to the Ptolemaic period, was acquired by the Museum in 1895. It is just under 4 metres long and has only been rarely moved or seen, even by Museum staff!

Packing the crocodile for its transport followed our methodology honed after years of transporting human mummified remains. Conservator Barbara Wills pinpointed areas of particular vulnerability to be either avoided or afforded particular protection during the process of preparing the crocodile for travel. Tiny baby crocodiles, each attached to a small reed, adorn the back of their ‘mother’, fixed in place by pitch or bitumen, a material that is particularly brittle and prone to damage.

Having carefully removed and separately contained the infants which had become detached at an earlier point in the objects’ history, we began the process of wrapping the adult crocodile in protective material, and arranging polythene bags filled with polystyrene balls at carefully selected points around its length and top.

The staff and students at the Royal Veterinary College took the arrival of their ancient patient very much in their stride, and offered us invaluable assistance in preparing the crocodile for the process of scanning. Having removed the several hundred screws which held the crate together we were able to manoeuvre the object into position on the bed of the scanner and commence the miraculously rapid CT scan. Julie and our curator for physical anthropology, Daniel Antoine, are now exploring the scan data to learn more about the crocodile(s), now safely back in store.

The crocodile will be the centrepiece of a display in Room 3, from 10 December 2015 to 21 February 2016, as part of the Asahi Shimbun Displays.



The crocodile being prepared for its journey to the Royal Veterinary College.

Processed CT scan data revealing details of the crocodile's skeleton.

Mummified crocodile. Likely from Kom Ombo, Egypt, Ptolemaic Period (EA 38562).



The collection

Late Middle Kingdom faience figurines

Gianluca Miniaci

Research Fellow, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

My three-month fellowship focused on late Middle Kingdom faience figurines, dating to around 1800–1550 BC. These figurines are made from a lustrous and usually blue faience and depict a broad range of animals – hippopotami, lions, baboons, crocodiles, cats and dogs, hedgehogs, but also dwarves, and a number of hybrid creatures such as Aha/Bes or Ipy/Taweret. Beside these categories, other faience objects include models of fruits, vegetables, dishes, cylinder jars, cups and bowls. The figurines seem to appear first in the late 12th Dynasty, and fall out of use in the Second Intermediate Period, when central power had collapsed. Their production seems to be intimately linked to the destiny of the ruling class of Middle Kingdom Egypt and to the development of new palace techniques and motifs.

Faience figurines represent a medium between different worlds, since they were mainly deposited in the burials with the intention to ward off evil. They were often found together with other categories of objects, such as ivory tusks, cuboid rods and feeding cups, which have been interpreted as tools for the protection of mother and child during pregnancy and childbirth. It is easy to imagine how the notion of birth in ancient Egypt easily extended to the destiny of the deceased – the dead required protection like a vulnerable new born infant.

The British Museum's collection includes figurines from excavations at Abydos, Asyut, Badari, Matarya, Mostagedda, Serabit el-Khadim, Tell el-Yahudiya and Thebes. I discovered that six unusual faience figurines – a pregnant female dwarf, an antelope (?), two hybrid creatures representing Aha and Ipy, and two model vessels – were all recorded as having come from a single tomb (G62) excavated by Flinders Petrie in 1902 at Abydos, on behalf of the Egypt Exploration Society. The remainder of the funerary equipment of this tomb, amounting to 31 objects, is also in the British Museum – pairs of ivory wands, a bronze mirror, a wooden fish, a silver torc, gold and silver rings, alabaster vessels, a copper bowl, various amulets, and many stone and faience beads.

I also realised that a large number of the faience figurines entered the Museum in 1891, and share significant similarities in manufacture, faience type and design. Although purchased from various collectors and dealers, they may have been found at a site in the north of Egypt since they have closely parallel examples from the elite cemeteries of Lisht, Lahun and Harageh, all archaeological sites located at the entrance of Fayum area.

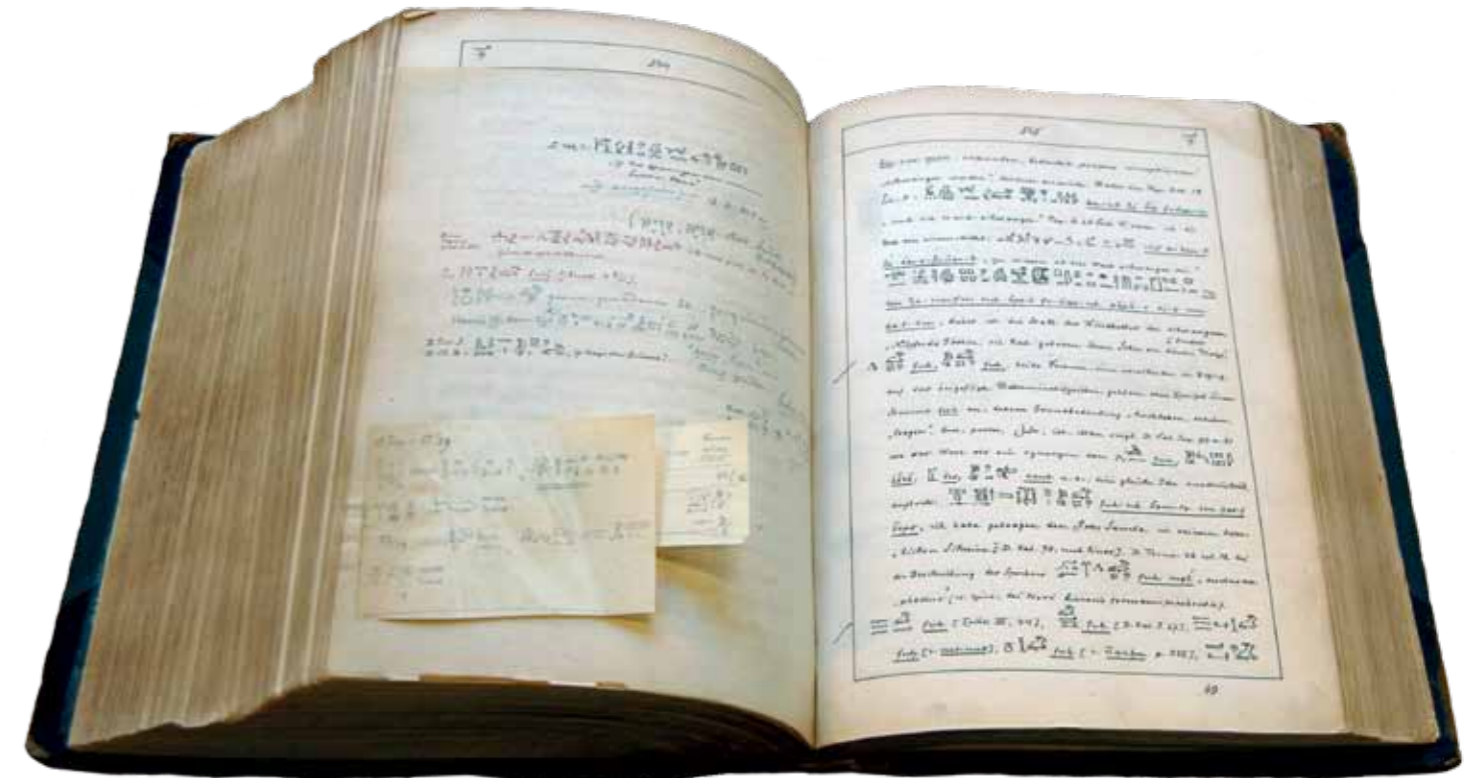
Fellowships are made possible through the support of the patrons of the Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan.



A roaring faience hippopotamus (EA 36346).

The collection

Heinrich Brugsch's annotated copy of his hieroglyphic-demotic dictionary



Susanne Woodhouse

Ann El-Mokadem Librarian, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

On 15 May 1899, when Wallis Budge was Keeper of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities, a seven-volume set of Heinrich Brugsch's *Hieroglyphisch-demotisches Wörterbuch* entered the library. Combining all published sources with unpublished material he had copied in Egypt and in the major European collections, including the British Museum, Brugsch compiled and explained 8,400 ancient Egyptian words on 3,146 handwritten pages. By including demotic spellings Brugsch created the first dictionary of the script and language used in Egypt between the 6th century BC and the 5th century AD. For its time this was a pioneering tool, intended for students of Egyptology, though contemporary reviews were written by well-known Egyptologists who highly praised the publication.

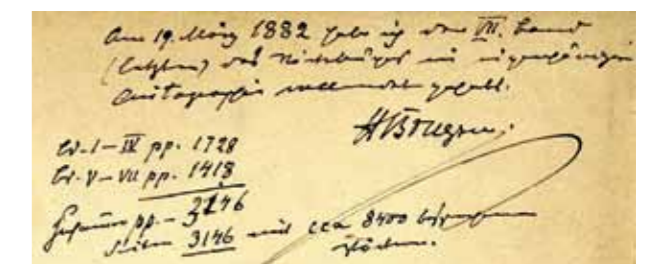
The copy that Budge acquired is important for its annotations. On the front free endpaper of the first volume Heinrich Brugsch noted: 'This is my working copy of the dictionary. The annotations (initially in red ink) are for the supplement no 1. Berlin 6 September 1867'. The interleafed and heavily annotated *Wörterbuch* proper (volumes 1–4), was published in 1867 and 1868. It has annotations in red and black ink, but also pencil. Volumes 5–7 form the supplement which is not interleafed, and are inscribed 'On March 19, 1882 I completed the seventh (last) volume of the dictionary in my own hand as autograph. H Brugsch'. These two dates mark the period during which the complete *Wörterbuch* was published. Occasional notes, in Brugsch's handwriting along the edges of the pages of the supplement, reveal his continued interest in improving this work.

Annotations in the interleafed second volume of the *Wörterbuch*.

Heinrich Brugsch's inscription marking the completion of the dictionary.

Budge acquired the set – highlighted in the foreword of the sales catalogue of Heinrich Brugsch's library in 1895 as a major achievement and described in its entry as *sehr wertvoll* (very valuable) – despite another one already residing in the Printed Books Department of the Museum. It is possible that the rarity and origin of this set must have attracted Budge – it was both book and object. Budge was in correspondence with Emil Brugsch, younger brother of Heinrich Brugsch, at the end of 1898 and 1899, and this connection might offer a clue to how this fabulous piece of the history of Egyptology was acquired by the British Museum.

The library of the Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan is generously supported by Dr Ahmed and Mrs Ann El-Mokadem.



The collection

Ancient Egypt, *Ulysses* and Richard Hamilton

Stephen Coppel

Curator, Department of Prints and Drawings

For more than 50 years the British artist Richard Hamilton (1922–2011) was preoccupied at different times with illustrating James Joyce's great modernist masterpiece *Ulysses*, first published in 1922, the year of the artist's birth. First shown in their entirety at the British Museum in the exhibition *Imaging Ulysses* in 2002, it is particularly gratifying that some 95 works on paper produced between 1948 and 1998 were acquired by the British Museum from the artist's estate.

Hamilton's *Ulysses* project has a special relevance to the British Museum. As a young man studying printmaking at the nearby Slade School of Art, Hamilton was a regular visitor to the Museum and to the Prints and Drawings Study Room. He conceived of illustrating Joyce's monumental 700-page novel – set in Dublin within a single day, 16 June 1904 – with etchings that would correspond to each of the book's 18 highly experimental episodes. In the late 1940s Hamilton made some 28 preparatory drawings, variously in watercolour, pen and ink and pencil, to try out his ideas. Hamilton never completed the illustrations to Joyce and it remains, like William Blake's illustrations to Dante, one of the great unfinished projects. From the 1980s, however, he made several large-scale independent etchings and studies pegged to a number of the episodes in the novel.

One of these, *In Horne's house*, illustrating the 'Oxen of the Sun' episode, has an interesting genesis. It began as a Cubist-inspired treatment of incipient forms in 1949 before being completely reworked more than 30 years later as a pastiche of the development of art through time. In Joyce's episode, set in a Dublin maternity hospital, a group of rowdy medical students enjoy a late-night party in a room adjoining one of the wards. In a brilliant parody of the evolving prose styles of English from Anglo-Saxon alliteration, Middle English, Shakespeare, through to Bunyan, Swift and so on to the



modern babel of English vernaculars, Joyce articulated the gradual birth of language. Hamilton's pictorial equivalent is a full-blown pastiche from art history, progressing like the developing foetus in the womb of time from an Easter Island head, an Egyptian profile, a Renaissance Madonna after Bellini, a youthful Rembrandt, before arriving at a Picasso Cubist still life laid on the table and a set of Futurist drinking glasses descending through space in a modernist nod to Marcel Duchamp. Dominating centre stage is the artist as hero pointing upwards to divine inspiration and dramatically thumping the earthbound table – the artist transmuting the daily bread of experience into everlasting life.

Stephen Dedalus, the novel's aspiring writer and brilliant intellectual, is here modelled on Baron Gros's depiction of the equally dazzling young Napoleon. Leopold Bloom, the middle-aged father figure to the young Dedalus, sits as Cézanne to the left pouring himself a drink at this sacramental communion of art-historical figures. Hamilton's choice of an Egyptian tomb figure parodied as a young aesthete finds a corresponding parallel in the occasional reference to ancient Egypt in Joyce's *Ulysses*. In another episode set in the National Library of Ireland a jaded Dedalus muses on the stale, learned atmosphere of the vaulted reading room: 'Coffined thoughts around me, in mummycases, embalmed in spice of words. Thoth, god of libraries, a birdgod, moonycrowned'.

Under one roof, like the British Museum itself, Hamilton presents a visual pantheon of the museum world from different cultures and civilisations. His personifications, whether anonymous or famous, converse with each other in a multiplicity of styles and language across time and space.

The works were accepted by HM Government in lieu of Inheritance Tax and allocated to the British Museum, 2013.

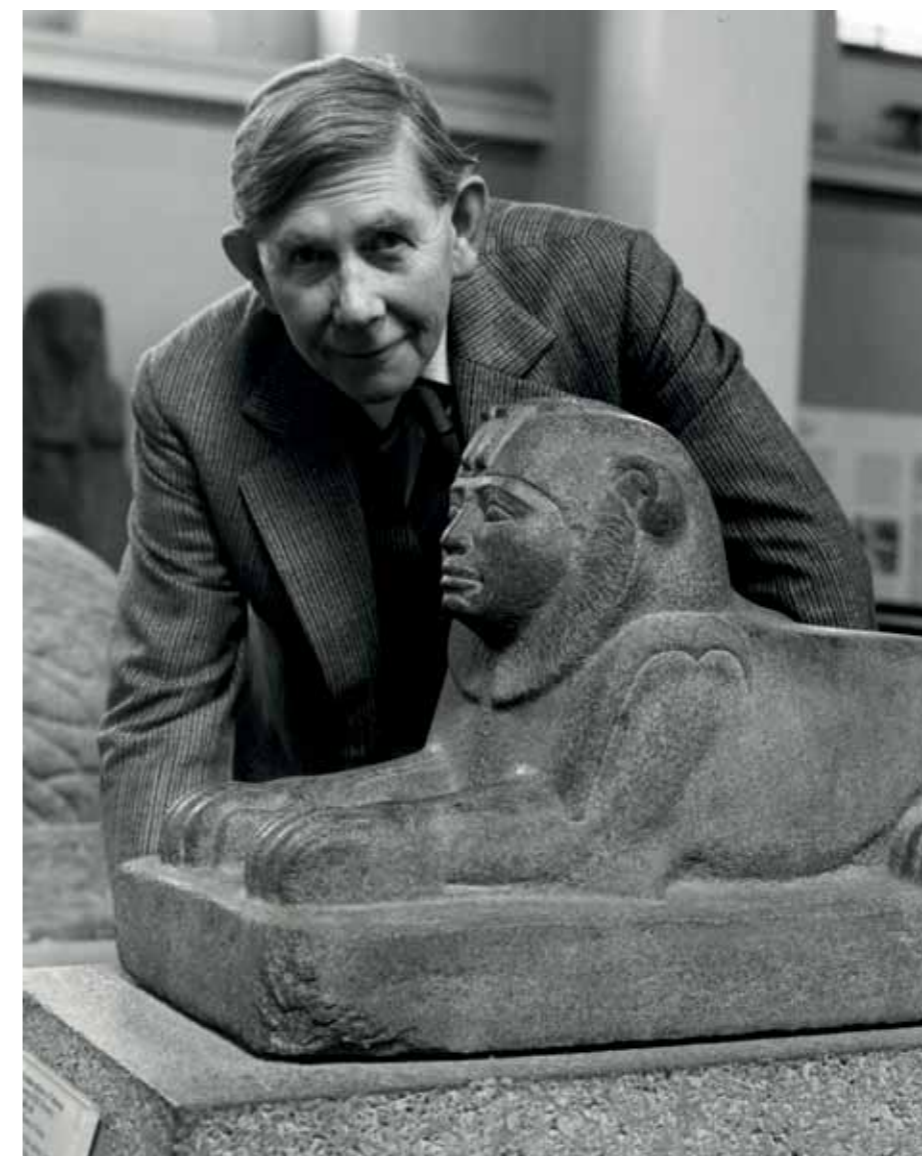


Richard Hamilton (1922–2011), *In Horne's house – study I*. Watercolour, pen and ink over graphite grid on paper, 1949. © Estate of Richard Hamilton.

Richard Hamilton (1922–2011), *In Horne's house – state VI*. Softground etching, lift-ground and spit-bite aquatint, line and stipple etching, engraving, 1982. © Estate of Richard Hamilton.

The collection

The archives of T G H James



Patricia Usick

On his retirement after 13 years as Keeper of the Egyptian Department in 1988, T G H (Harry) James, reminisced to the British Museum Society's *Bulletin* about the many changes at the Museum since he had joined it in 1951:

'When I first came here there was a kind of closed season between about October and March, when the galleries were scarcely visited except at weekends. I remember going down the Egyptian Sculpture Gallery on November afternoons: fog outside drifting in little wisps into the galleries, the galleries themselves lit by a very few pendant globes, dark – inspissate, you might say – nothing disturbing the quiet, scarcely a visitor, the faint drone of a dozing warder in a chair, and that would be about it. Very atmospheric it was. That never happens nowadays; the tourist season lasts all the year round.'

He wrote as he spoke, with elegance, fluency and wit, and, as seen above, deploying what his obituary in *The Times* in 2009 called his belief in 'challenging the reader by the occasional use of an uncommon word or phrase.' While his many publications on epigraphy and Egypt's history reflect his main academic interests, he encouraged regular fieldwork in Egypt, and his most visible impact in the Museum was the innovation of a

room showing Egyptian daily life, and the redesign of the Egyptian Sculpture Gallery (Room 4) in 1981. The quiet of those early days in the galleries was soon succeeded by a surge of popular interest in Egypt following the increase in package travel and the UNESCO-sponsored rescue of ancient temples from the rising waters of the Aswan Dam, all culminating in the 'Egyptomania' of the Tutankhamun exhibition in 1972, the income from which went to save the temple of Philae.

In retirement, James lectured and wrote. His biography *Howard Carter: the Path to Tutankhamun* appeared in 1992. His interests were wide ranging, from cooking and fine wines to terms as Chairman at the Freud Museum and the Egypt Exploration Society, and the Presidency of the Association for the Study of Travel in Egypt and the Near East. Thanks to the generosity of his son Stephen, some 70 boxes of his meticulously stored and labelled personal papers – correspondence, photographs, research material and memorabilia – have been donated to the British Museum.

Harry James in the Egyptian Sculpture Gallery.

The collection
Conserving Late Antique sculpture



Left side of a limestone arch before treatment showing significant deterioration.

The same object after laser cleaning, and major consolidation and filling of lamination using conservation grade materials.

Cleaned and stable object, following 100 hours of conservation work. From Egypt (EA 1606).

Elisabeth R O'Connell
 Curator, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

In 2007 and 2008, conservators Karen Birkhoelzer and Amy Drago surveyed 452 Late Antique (or 'Coptic') stone objects. Dating to around AD 250–800, the collection includes stelae, mostly funerary, and architectural elements representing the period when Egypt gradually became a majority Christian population. The figural scenes display a wide range of content, mainly derived from classical or Christian iconography. The survey allowed a prioritisation of objects for further treatment, including those being studied as part of research projects on Antinoupolis and Wadi Sarga, or requiring urgent attention. Two of the most dramatic cases of the latter are presented here.

Michelle Hercules
 Conservator, Department of Conservation and Scientific Research

While exhibition and publication projects often dictate priorities for conservation treatments, surveys allow us to identify those objects in need of urgent attention. This stone survey estimated over 5,790 hours of conservation was needed, and we have completed treatment of 19 objects needing remedial work, with conservators and student interns working side by side in the stone conservation studio. Analytical research and investigation by scientists in the Department is providing information on why certain types of limestone objects are proving so fragile – what we call 'category D'.

An example are the two segments of a limestone arch, which was extremely fragile, with detached stone flakes and severe lamination and deep fissures on the stone surface. Even handling the object risked further damage. The carved surface of this Late Antique arch was significantly eroded, but the continuation of the crumbling stone structure within the stone resulted in areas of the carved surface displaying a brittle 'eggshell'-like layer of stone which would collapse under the slightest pressure, to reveal dry open pit holes filled with powdered stone.

The Department of Conservation and Scientific Research use a Q-switched, dual wavelength laser to deal with objects of this type. This is the most appropriate way to clean the limestone without damaging it; as the process is a 'non-contact' method of cleaning. The laser uses pure light energy at a particular wavelength to remove dirt and unwanted coatings from the surface of objects which are suitable for this process. The arch fragments were successfully laser cleaned, which enabled me to carry out the rest of the extensive conservation treatment.



Relief EA 69016 before and after conservation treatment.



Mark Searle
 City and Guilds of London Art School, and intern in stone, wall paintings and mosaics conservation, Department of Conservation and Scientific Research

Although categorised as severely degraded in the survey, only when a limestone relief depicting Christ and four saints was removed from its Victorian wooden box was the full extent of the deterioration evident. Multiple large fissures ran through the structure, much of one corner had fully disintegrated to stone dust, and the bottom edge was shattered into multiple fragments. Although a procedure not practised in conservation nowadays, a past application of what is probably a cellulose nitrate coating had actually preserved the surface and resulted in the surprisingly sharp and stable carved forms when compared to the object's dramatic structural deterioration.

Salt efflorescence was present across the surface of the object, caused by fluctuation in humidity during storage in the wooden box and probably contributing to its deterioration. However, more investigation was required in order to establish the actual reason for the object's poor condition. I first removed the detached fragments from the relief, to allow access to the stone within and enable

consolidation and reassembly of the stone pieces. The source of the extreme degradation soon became evident – three large iron cramps had been inserted into the piece, an attempt to provide support and stability. However, the expansion of the metal as it rusted exerted enormous pressure on the surrounding limestone, resulting in large cracks and fragmentation. I removed the metal elements and filled the resulting cavities with a reversible conservation grade resin filler. Similar to a jigsaw puzzle, I then rebuilt the object from the multiple fragments on a new backing board. Powdery areas were consolidated and heavily soiled sections were cleaned using the laser. After retouching the various filled areas using acrylic paints, the relief can now be appreciated as a coherent object again, and is stable enough for study and display.

The collection
**First millennium AD textiles:
 conservation, storage and treatment**



Square tapestry panel in multi-coloured wool depicting a bird and a cross-within-wreath. From Akhmim, Egypt, 4th–7th century AD (EA 22870).

Detailed of a multi-coloured tapestry panel, depicting stylised human figures. From Egypt, 4th–7th century AD (EA 37131).



Late Antique Egyptian textiles rehoused in storage drawers after study, documentation and photography.

Elisabeth R O'Connell
 Curator, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

A survey of textiles was undertaken by conservator Anna Harrison and Museum Assistant Emily Taylor in 2008 and 2009 with the aim of recommending improved storage conditions for each textile, thereby reducing unnecessary handling and improving accessibility. This survey provided the basis both for a re-storage programme (led by Emily) and for conservation treatment of objects, including those under study as part of Antinopolis and Wadi Sarga research projects, or as training for Organics Conservation student interns under the supervision of Anna and her colleagues Nicole Rode, Monique Pullan and Pippa Cruickshank. With Amandine Mérat joining the Museum in 2013, a systematic re-storage and documentation of these first millennium AD textiles was completed.

Amandine Mérat
 Curator, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

Emily Taylor
 Museum Assistant, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

The Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan houses more than 500 Late Antique and medieval textiles from Egypt. A first, partial textile audit, by expert Hero Granger-Taylor in the early 1990s, provided useful technical information about numerous Egyptian textiles in the collection. Working with intern Ruiha Smalley, we aimed to reorganise the Roman, Byzantine and early Islamic textiles into a coherent and accessible storage

system, along with the improvement of their documentation by adding photographs, technical analyses, iconographic and cultural information.

As with many other museums, the British Museum's collection of Late Antique Egyptian textiles was mostly acquired through excavation, gift and purchase in the late 19th and early 20th century. From the 2nd century AD, Egyptian people progressively gave up mummification, to bury their dead in the clothes they wore in life, sometimes wrapped in furnishing textiles reused as funerary shrouds. This explains why the great majority of the textiles were discovered in cemeteries and burial contexts, thus often naturally damaged by centuries spent in the sand, explaining among other reasons their fragmentary state of preservation. Furthermore, at the time of



excavation, decorative elements – considered as spectacular or aesthetically pleasing in accordance with the taste of the period – were often cut out from large pieces, as only the most vibrant and colourful pieces were wanted by European collectors. As a result, textile components were cut off from their archaeological contexts – the findspots for many textiles in this collection are, unfortunately, rarely known.

Findspots such as Akhmim, Antinopolis or Saqqara are sometimes recorded in the Museum registers in connection with Egyptological figures such as Wallis Budge and John Greville Chester, perhaps reflecting where they were purchased. This prompted us to arrange the textiles collection by technique, rather than date or provenance, except in the case of those from excavations at Qasr Irbim or Wadi Sarga.

We began by separating fragmentary textiles and 'complete' pieces, such as child and adult tunics, pillow covers, hoods, socks etc., in order to store together the latter by function. The second step was to classify the remaining hundreds of fragmentary textiles by their primary weaving technique, such as plain weave, tapestry, brocade, flying threads brocading and embroidery. This process helped us to work out, after the number and sizes of textiles in each group, how much storage space was required, taking into account of course the fragility of the textiles, but also the need for easy access and the possibility of new items joining the collection at a later date. Each primary group was then subdivided on the basis of shape (square, roundels, bands) or iconography (geometrical, floral, animal, figurative) of the textiles.

Drawer by drawer, we systematically completed the technical and iconographic analyses for each textile. When a piece had already been studied by Hero Granger-Taylor in the 1990s, her corresponding catalogue card became the basis of our study, her detailed notes checked and annotated where needed. However, a great majority of the textiles had never been studied before. For these, the fibres, mainly in linen and wool, in rare cases silk and cotton, were identified, along with the direction of the warp and the torsion – known as the 'S' or 'Z' direction – and number per centimetre of the warp and weft threads. After measurements, a complete description of the piece and its iconography was made. Thanks to this close visual examination and technical analysis, alongside consideration of the cultural background in which they were produced, the original function of the textiles and dating were reattributed where possible.

The textiles were then photographed, with an arrow included to indicate the direction of the warp of the fabric. Finally, each textile was rehoused in acid-free tissue paper with padding where required, or placed in clear plastic film sleeves, and then placed on corrugated plastic sheets made from polypropylene. Now back in their drawers, the textiles are easily accessible to scholars, textile enthusiasts and designers, whether in person or online – all of the documentation is now incorporated within the Museum's collection database.



In Egypt
The port of Berenike



Roberta Tomber
Honorary Research Fellow,
Department of Conservation and Scientific Research

The Ptolemaic and Roman port of Berenike played a critical role in Egypt's trade with the east from its founding by Ptolemy II in the mid-3rd century BC until its last known literary reference in the *Martyrium Sancti Arethae* of AD 524/5. The first modern identification of the site was by Giovanni Belzoni in 1818. Since then it has been visited by a number of Europeans, notably Wilkinson, who in 1826 planned the site, including a temple to Serapis. Since 1994 the site has been excavated by the Universities of Delaware and Leiden/UCLA, with the current campaign from 2008 conducted by Steven Sidebotham (University of Delaware) and Iwona Zych (Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology). This work centres particularly on the harbour area and the Ptolemaic town, and I oversee the ceramic research at the site.

The site was initially founded to procure military elephants from Africa, and recent excavation of a robbed out Ptolemaic tower and wall demonstrates that at this time the site was defended. After the annexation of Egypt in 30 BC, interaction with Africa continued, although it was by then economically motivated. From this time Berenike played an instrumental role in the direct long-distance exchange with South Arabia and India.

During the Roman period, the Berenike community is characterised by its multi-ethnic composition. This is reflected by the diverse written scripts identified on site – Greek, Latin, Coptic, demotic, hieroglyphic and pre-Islamic South Arabian, Tamil-Brahmi, Prakrit, Sanskrit, Hebrew or Aramaic, and Palmyrene – alongside a diverse range of religious structures, including a church and shines for mystery cults. The pottery, too, underlines the links between

Berenike and other regions beyond the Empire – storage jars and cooking pots from north and south India and South Arabia, decorated and utilitarian vessels from East Africa, and glazed wares from Mesopotamia have all be identified. The exceptional preservation means that archaeobotanical finds from these same regions have been identified, and also resulted in the 2014 discovery of about half of a ship's frame from a heavily burnt deposit abandoned during the 2nd century AD. This is the first find of this nature found throughout the Indian Ocean and demonstrates the continuing richness of the site.

The 2014 excavations at Berenike, a joint project of the University of Delaware (Department of History) and the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology (University of Warsaw), who funded the project, with additional support from the British Academy, Honor Frost Foundation and the Polish Ministry of Education. Valerie Seeger, Norman Shelly, Steven and Mary Sidebotham, William Whelan, and Iwona Zych provided further support.



Previous page:
Excavations in the Hellenion of Naukratis in May 2014, with the modern cemetery in the background. For more information visit britishmuseum.org/naukratis

Robbed out tower of the Ptolemaic period.

Excavation of a Ptolemaic amphora.

In Egypt
Rock inscriptions in Aswan



Marcel Marée
Curator, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

Each year the Swiss Institute of Architectural and Archaeological Research (Cairo) conducts rescue excavations in Old Aswan. Windows of archaeological opportunity appear between the demolition of derelict modern houses and the construction of new ones, allowing the history of the area to be gradually pieced together. One strand of evidence is offered by rock inscriptions that pre-date the settlement levels. They were carved into the boulders that rise from the river but lie concealed beneath the current city profile. I have joined the mission to fully record and study this important epigraphic material.

The First Cataract of the Nile, on which the Aswan region borders, has always provided a natural boundary between Egypt and lands located to the south. During most of antiquity Egypt's frontier lay further upstream, anywhere between Lower Nubia and the farthest reaches of ancient Kush, yet both practically and ideologically the Aswan area retained the status of a border locality. Due to its commercial and strategic significance, and because of its role as a muster point for expeditions, it saw invariably a heavy military presence. Through most of pharaonic history, the focus of settlement and cultic activity lay on the better protected island of Elephantine nearby, but the east bank too, with its bizarre landscape of boulders and rock formations, received the unending attention of Egypt's central government, and it is of this that the inscriptions speak eloquently.

Aswan is most famed for its extensive quarries of granite and granodiorite, the stones of choice for much sculpture and for key parts of sacred monuments, intended to last forever.

The constant bustle of quarrying activity involved, of course, also the military, so many soldiers and officers are named in the inscriptions. The purpose of these texts was strictly commemorative. Some are simple graffiti, but the majority classify as formal art, designed with care by professional craftsmen and routinely including an offering prayer. Due to the general absence of biographical information, the main interest of the texts resides in people's names and titles. Apart from the military, we meet the sort of government officials found in other regions exploited for their natural resources, such as Sinai and the Wadi Hammamat. We learn of their families and associates, not necessarily present but dutifully listed so that they, too, would be remembered. Among the other people named are senior lector priests (see page 14) and individuals with rare titles such as physicians and keepers of document chests. The value of proper names is that they often reveal from where people came, especially the rare names and those invoking particular deities. Some of the army officers hailed from as far afield as the Nile Delta, while others came from towns more nearby such as Edfu, and of course from Aswan itself.

It is a daunting job to rescue the inscriptions from their sites of discovery for further study and future display. While many have been found detached from the bedrock and reduced to fragments, sometimes scattered in massive rubbish tips, a good number emerge *in situ*. Their extraction requires great skill, due to veins and fissures already present, but the high degree of success at which this is achieved is a tribute to the skills of the Egyptian workmen assigned to the task. Most of the inscriptions found over the years are badly weathered and difficult to read, but the majority have now been deciphered and drawn in facsimile, and they are the subject of a planned monograph.

Marcel's work at Aswan is part of the Swiss Institute of Architectural and Archaeological Research project at Aswan, under the direction of Cornelius von Pilgrim and Wolfgang Müller, in collaboration with the Ministry of Antiquities. For further information, visit swissinst.ch



Boulders with inscriptions emerge in the heart of Old Aswan.

An inscription with numerous figures, newly revealed inside the storeroom of a sandwich shop.



In Sudan Suburban sprawl at Amara West

Neal Spencer
Keeper, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

On three occasions last season, the howling northerly winds at Amara West in northern Sudan forced us to stop work, as the windborne sand reduced visibility, and anything we excavated quickly refilled with sand. Yet the same phenomena – wind and sand from the Sahara – are the reason that the ancient town is so well preserved, engulfed and hidden from view for centuries. The first systematic excavations at the site were undertaken by the Egypt Exploration Society (1938–1939, 1947–1950), leading to the discovery of a Ramesside temple and the residence of the Deputy of Kush – the town was a new centre for Egypt's control of Nubia, from 1300 to 1070 BC).

The current research project focuses on ancient lived experience, rather than cult monuments and inscriptions. Excavations within the walled town have revealed a series of small houses, created, modified, rebuilt and replaced over six or seven generations. Deploying a range of scientific analyses – on the microscopic structure of mud floors, the botanical or faunal remains, ceramic technology or the processing of pigment for decorating houses and objects – we are revealing further insights into ancient life.

Last season, the first as part of the Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project, represented the start of a new phase of research, exploring a series of houses built outside the town walls. Created later in the town's history, perhaps in the late 19th Dynasty, the construction of houses here implies the town walls were not required for defensive purposes. The first buildings here may have been two spacious villas (up to 400 m² in area), followed by a series of more modest houses. Each is somewhat individual, though rooms with low-benches (*mastabas*), food preparation areas, and staircases to the upper storey are typical features. In one room, layers of dung suggest the presence of livestock inside house D12.7. An area of small garden plots outside the same house hints at small-scale production of vegetables, fruit or herbs for households.

We know little about who lived in these houses, although a reused door lintel found blocking a porch added to the front of house D12.7 depicts an elite individual who must have lived somewhere in the town. Named as 'the lady of the house, Iytjet', she is depicted in the long wig fashionable in Ramesside Egypt, accompanied by a pet monkey, who prances under her chair.

Like the houses inside the town walls, this suburb changed over time – new, smaller houses were squeezed into open spaces. As excavations continue here, it is becoming clear that the town initially conceived by the pharaonic state around 1300 BC – defensive walls, temple, official residence – had become something very different, reflecting the needs and desires of a growing population.

The Amara West research project is funded by the Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project, with previous funding from The Leverhulme Trust (2010–2014), the Michela Schiff-Giorgini Foundation (2012, 2013–2014) and the British Academy (2009).



Previous page:
Recording and
excavation in
house D12.7.

Sandstone door
lintel re-used in
house D11.1.

In Sudan Kawa and its hinterland



Derek Welsby
Curator, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

The Sudan Archaeological Research Society, in conjunction with the British Museum, has undertaken fieldwork at Kawa since 1993, but a major new research project, *Kawa and its hinterland. Urban and rural settlements of the Kerma, New Kingdom and Kushite periods* commenced in 2013, with a focus upon the Kushite town and cemetery at Kawa, and at site H25, 40km to the south. Kawa, on the banks of the Nile, was the major urban centre in the region from at least the mid-14th century BC into the 4th century AD. Site H25 was one of the approximately 150 settlements dating to the Kerma period (2500–1450 BC) which lined the banks of three Nile channels and was one of the few to survive the drying up of the eastern channels before being abandoned in the earlier 1st millennium BC.

During the 2013–2014 season at Kawa, we brought to light an area of housing with multiple phases of occupation dating to the 4th–3rd centuries BC, lying 180 metres to the south of the large stone temple built by Taharqo. Substantial areas in the northern and southern parts of the town were investigated using ground-penetrating radar, revealing a dense layout of buildings to the north of the Taharqo temple.

The excavations in the cemetery proved particularly interesting with the uncovering of a fine dressed sandstone pyramid. Over 10m square, the funerary monument is of very similar dimensions and quality of construction to those marking royal burials at Jebel Barkal. On its eastern side the Kawa pyramid had a barrel-vaulted offering chapel with plastered and painted interior, the polychromatic decoration enhanced with large areas of gold leaf. As well as the substantial descandary giving access into the subterranean tomb from the east, a highly unusual feature was another large descandary dug on the west side of the monument. Other smaller pyramids of dressed stone and of mud brick were also investigated. Unfortunately very little survived of the early Kushite site at H25 but an extensive New Kingdom settlement with storage facilities and other mud-brick buildings was partly uncovered, along with vast amounts of pottery and other artefacts.

In addition to the archaeology, the project seeks to enhance site protection measures, by extending the barbed wire fence boundaries around the core archaeological zones – the pharaonic and Kushite town, the Kushite cemetery and two Kerma settlements – as well as marking out a buffer zone. To maintain the integrity of these boundaries a post for the Tourist Police was constructed on the margins of the site.

The project would like to thank the National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums and the Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project for funds, logistical assistance and permission to undertake its activities

The large dressed-stone pyramid discovered in the 2013–2014 season. It is the fifth stone pyramid excavated so far on the site.

View over the settlement at site H25, adjacent to a dried-up river channel.



In Sudan
New insights into the history of cancer

Michaela Binder
Austrian Archaeological Institute

Archaeological human remains yield a wide range of information about life in the past, including diet, migration and disease. This can also be useful to medical research today because understanding the evolution and history of a disease can be crucial for developing new research strategies. However, for many of the diseases commonly affecting humans today, cancer being the most notable, these are virtually unknown. In February 2013, the skeleton of a young man was discovered at Amara West, which may contribute towards understanding the long history of what is, at present, the single leading cause of death worldwide.

The well-preserved skeleton (Sk244-8) was of a man who died between 21 and 35 years of age, buried together with at least 20 other individuals in a large underground tomb in Cemetery C at Amara West. Ceramics recovered from the tomb date the burial to around 1200 BC. The grave goods accompanying the burial, including wooden coffins, scarabs and amulets conform to typical Egyptian style, but the tomb is marked by a burial mound typical of Nubian funerary practice. The tomb embodies centuries of cultural mixture in the border zone between Egypt and Nubia.

While the young age at death of Sk244-8 is not unusual at Amara West, reflecting high levels of infectious or nutritional diseases, the bones of the torso attest to an unusual ordeal, ultimately resulting in his death. The ribs, spine, clavicles, shoulder blades, hip bones, thighs and upper body are riddled by a multitude of circular and oval shaped holes (3–12mm). Analytical techniques including X-ray and scanning electron microscopy, carried out in the research facilities of the Department of Conservation and Scientific Research at the British Museum, provided proof that these indeed resulted from a disease, rather than (for example) termite damage. Based on the size and distribution of the holes, these can securely be identified as metastases spreading to the skeleton by a cancer originating in an organ.

Without soft tissue, the skeletal changes cannot be attributed to a specific cancer. However, the well-documented archaeological background of the man provides insights into the natural and living environment at Amara West, allowing us to identify several possible sources. Wood fire smoke, particularly when used indoors, is just as unhealthy as tobacco smoking. At ancient Amara West, large bread ovens and kilns were built inside small enclosed, sometimes roofed, spaces, exposing people to harmful substances and potentially causing lung cancer. Some infectious diseases are also linked to cancer. Schistosomiasis, a parasitic disease, still representing a major health problem in the Nile Valley today, can lead to breast cancer in men and may serve as explanation for the cancer in the man from Amara West too.

Regardless of the cause, the young man from Amara West represents the oldest complete example of a metastatic cancer originating from soft tissue, one of very few cancer cases identified in human remains older than 500 years.

The excavation and analysis of the skeletal material from Amara West (2011–2013) was made possible through a grant from The Leverhulme Trust for the project Health and diet in ancient Nubia.



Skeleton of the young man from grave 244 at Amara West (Sk244-8).

In Sudan
Expanding horizons at Dangeil



Julie Anderson
Curator, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

The research project at Dangeil, a site 350km north of Khartoum, has been expanded beyond excavation and training to focus upon conserving, protecting and presenting the site for visitors and future generations.

The site covers an area of 300x400m, and excavations have focused on the large walled precinct at the centre of the site that encloses an Amun temple dated to the 1st century AD. A paved processional way, formerly flanked by ram statues, leads from the temple, through a kiosk, to a monumental gate. Remains of three altars have been discovered within the temple sanctuary, and in the sanctuary each column and the sanctuary facings are decorated with carved Meroitic hieroglyphs and Nile gods. In addition, a free-standing raised dais was uncovered in the northernmost room of the temple. As Dangeil is well preserved, it has provided our team with a unique opportunity to examine the characteristics of a Kushite temple complex, and to gain greater insight into the role of the temple, ritual and offerings within Kushite society. The site of Dangeil has few known parallels and, as such, it is essential that it be recorded and preserved.

Our most recent excavations concentrated on the area in front of the temple, where remains of a colonnade and the processional way were exposed, and upon the north-west corner of the *temenos* enclosure. A mound situated behind the temple revealed numerous cooking installations associated with the temple offerings, yielding many ceramic offering moulds. On the temple site and associated cemetery, our knowledge of the ancient landscape was also further enhanced through ground-penetrating radar and magnetometry surveys.

Over the next four years, we will continue investigations along the temple dromos and gate, and salvage excavations in the associated Kushite cemetery, thus providing both comparative material and greater insight into the settlement landscape of Kushite Dangeil. Where possible, excavated buildings and artefacts will be conserved using local

materials and through training local specialists, to help create a sustainable means of conserving the temple for the future. We have also been defining the boundaries of the archaeological zone, surrounded by modern housing, with the aim of preventing destructive traffic from crossing the site.

We are also implementing a site management and presentation programme which includes basic visitor facilities and a small site museum devoted to the exhibition of objects excavated at Dangeil, allowing the site to be understood within its historical context. This has involved analysing archaeological features and determining what to present and why, how best to achieve this, and what lasting implications this might have. We hope this will result in visitors being able to appreciate a standing temple complex of the 1st century AD.

Since 2013, fieldwork at Dangeil, a project of the National Corporation of Antiquities and Museums (Sudan) in cooperation with the British Museum, has been funded through the Qatar-Sudan Archaeological Project, the Institute for Bioarchaeology, and the generous support of Dr Dagmar Bird. Follow Julie on Twitter @Amesemi



The Amun temple from above. Photo: Y Guichard.

Ground penetrating radar survey being conducted by a team from the University of Southampton and British School in Rome.



In the UK
Ancient Egyptian coffins: craft traditions and functionality

John Taylor
 Curator, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

In recent decades Egyptian coffins have become the focus of new and innovative research, and the 2014 Annual Egyptological Colloquium brought together an international panel of 17 speakers, whose varied papers reflected some of the themes currently under scrutiny. The aim was to explore not only the religious function of the coffins and the ways in which their roles determined their shape, iconography and inscriptional content, but also the crucial relationship between magical concepts and the craftsmen who made, decorated and sometimes recycled the coffins.

The papers covered a long time span, from the Middle Kingdom to the Ptolemaic period, and illustrated many unfamiliar coffins, both recently excavated specimens and unpublished examples residing in museum storerooms. How style varied from region to region was considered, together with what this might imply about patterns of belief and the relationship between different centres of craftsmanship. Another topic which has received little attention from scholars, the custom of creating 'nests' or assemblages of coffins, one inside the other, was explored by Anders Bettum in the context of Egyptian concepts of regenerative cycles and the topography of the netherworld.

Anna Stevens threw intriguing light on one of the major gaps in knowledge, with a survey of coffins recently found in excavations at the South Tombs Cemetery at Amarna. Made for some of the humbler occupants of Akhenaten's new city, they seem to have been painted by local craftsmen who were facing the challenge of adapting traditional forms to the king's new religious ideals. Figures of human offering bearers replace the standard images of gods, but not in every case – a jackal-headed figure appears on the side of one coffin, showing that the king's proscription of the old gods was not followed rigidly.

Much of the research presented during the colloquium drew upon objects in the British Museum's collection, and below are highlights from three individuals providing new insights into these objects. As a perfect complement to the theme of the colloquium, this year's Raymond and Beverly Sackler Distinguished Lecture in Egyptology, delivered by Professor Harco Willems of the Catholic University Leuven, described a Middle Kingdom precursor of the Book of the Dead, inscribed on the coffins of the lector priest Sesenebef.



Wooden coffin of Pasenhor. Thebes, Egypt, Late Third Intermediate Period, 730–680 BC (EA 24906).

(Left) Detail of wooden coffin of a man called Iineb. 26th Dynasty or later (EA 6693).

In the UK

Regional variability in coffin production: two northern coffins at the British Museum

Katharina Stövesand

Institute for African Studies and Egyptology,
University of Cologne

Late Period coffins of the northern and middle Egyptian regions have long been neglected in studies of ancient Egypt. The majority of these coffins come from early excavations lacking proper documentation, or have been acquired through the antiquities market and distributed to museums and private collections all over the world, making them hard to locate and access. Due to their rather simple appearance – in comparison with Theban coffins – they are rarely part of museum displays. My PhD research seeks to study these coffins, examining local traditions in coffin production of the Late Period by looking closely at the shape, iconography, textual decoration and colour patterns of the coffins in the Memphite area, the Fayum and other Middle Egyptian findspots. These are then compared with southern centres of coffin production, such as Thebes and Akhmim, which have already been thoroughly studied.

The research has shown that the coffins from the northern and middle Egyptian regions show unique decoration patterns – did some innovations in coffin shapes and styles originate from these areas? The evidence suggests that coffin production at that time was not a centralised process coordinated by a single centre such as Thebes, but rather a manufacture process with several regional and local workshops, which often designed their own decoration patterns.

In the British Museum's collection, coffins from Saqqara have proved particularly interesting. Anthropoid in shape, these are equipped with a pedestal, a common inner coffin type at that time. The coffins show a complex design of spells and vignettes from the Book of the Dead, arranged in neat registers and compartments. The coffin of a man named Itineb was decorated with the spells 42 and 125 – the latter as a central vignette below the winged protective goddess Nut on the breast of the coffin. The use of spells and vignettes from the Book of the Dead as the predominant decoration is similar to Theban coffin designs. However, the layout of the coffins and the colour schemes differ. Most significantly, Theban coffins lack the motif of a goddess on the rear of the coffin case. This motif, which is found on the coffin of Irtyru (EA 6695), appears to be a diagnostic feature of northern coffin production. These two Memphite coffins in the British Museum may thus not only attest to the high quality of the Saqqara artists, but also proof of the rich variety and uniqueness of the iconography of coffin production outside of Thebes.

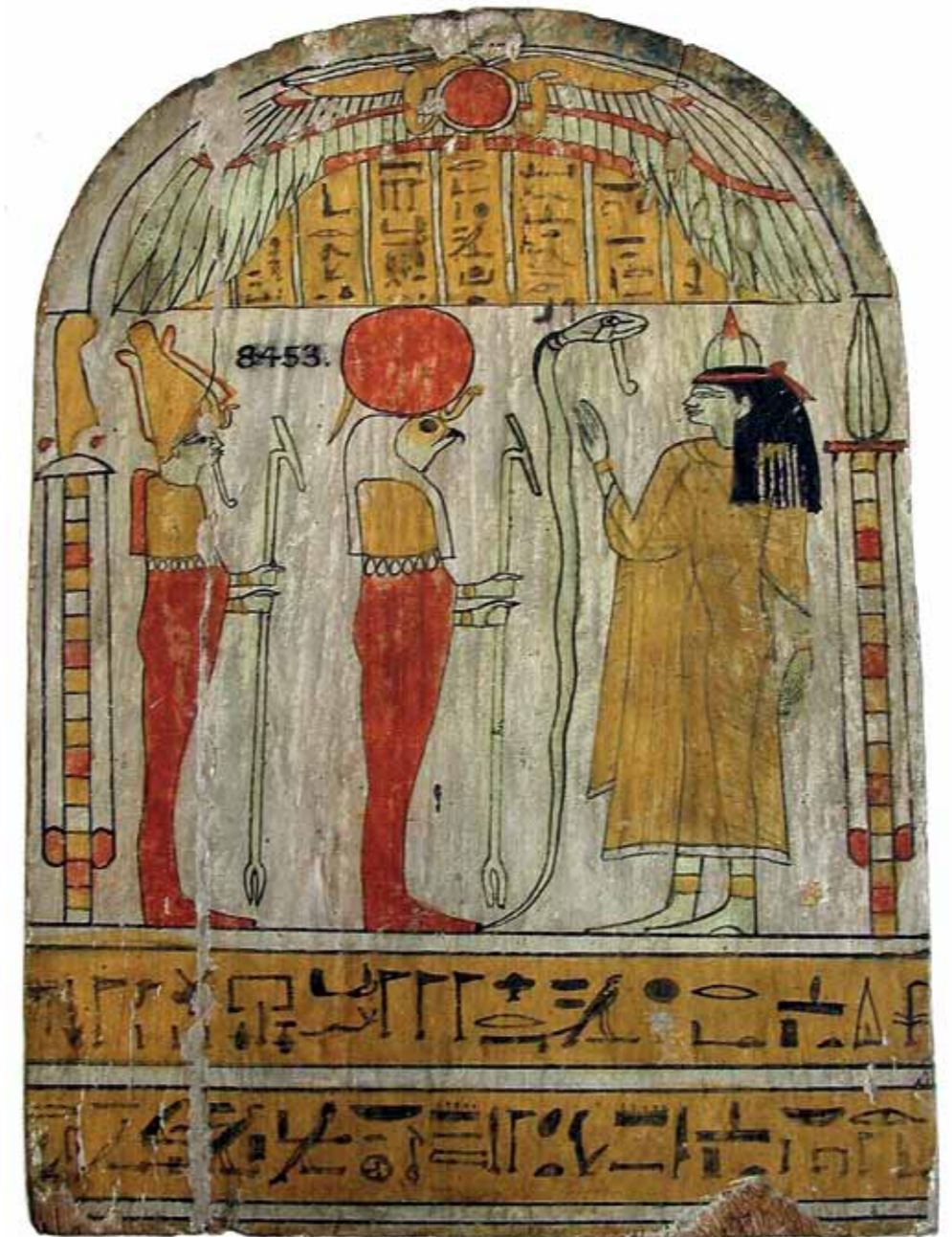
This research year at the British Museum, allowing access to the collection and excellent library resources, was funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) as part of my doctoral research.



Wooden coffin of a man called Itineb. 26th Dynasty or later (EA 6693).

In the UK

A wooden stela from Thebes



Hisham el-Leithy

Ministry of Antiquities, Egypt

Several research scholarships to the British Museum provided me with the opportunity to study the wooden funerary stelae, a type of object common in major museum collections. This resulted in a PhD on the subject, in which I explore how the stelae became an essential element of funerary furniture in the tombs of the elite from the 22nd Dynasty, replacing tomb decoration as a major support for funerary texts. The stelae performed an additional function of safeguarding the names of the deceased, and of placing them directly under the protection of the gods.

Across the centuries, the decoration and selection of texts on these stelae changed, though the name and representation of the deceased remain constant factors. The earlier examples include a scene of the dead adoring the sun-god Ra-Horakhty, above an offering formula. At the

Wooden stela. From Thebes, 26th Dynasty (EA 8453).

end of the 8th century BC (23rd–25th Dynasties) a process of change becomes apparent, culminating in a Theban type where an upper part (lunette) comprised symbolic motifs, a middle part contained a scene of the deceased before one god or a group of gods, and the lower part featured an offering formula or a prayer to the god.

This British Museum stela is an exquisite example of the type, which I presented at the Egyptological Colloquium. A sky or heaven symbol fills the upper curve, supported by the symbols for west (left) and east (right). A winged sun-disc frames vertical lines of hieroglyphs that give the name of the deceased, Hetepamun, and of the gods – Atum (snake), Ra-Horakhty (with sun-disc) and Osiris. The two lines of text below give an offering formula and the name of the deceased's father and mother.

In the UK

Coffin reuse in the 21st Dynasty: how and why did the Egyptians reuse the body containers of their ancestors?

Kathlyn (Kara) Cooney

Associate Professor of Egyptian Art and Architecture,
UCLA

For most of its history, Egyptology has looked upon tomb robbery and funerary arts reuse as aberrant, regressive and abnormal. In their literature, the Egyptians themselves repeatedly describe the ideal burial situation as a stone house in which the ancestors reside for eternity, supported by income-producing lands set aside in an endowment to pay for priests and provisions in perpetuity. My current research on 21st Dynasty coffins is attempting to highlight the recycling of funerary arts – at least during a time of crisis – as a creative process that prioritised the coffin's value of ritual over the value of perpetual use.

To this end, I am currently working my way through many of the approximately 800 21st Dynasty coffins spread about the globe. So far, over 50% of the coffins examined bear evidence of reuse. Some coffin reusers inscribed a new name, whereas others put in a new name and redecorated parts of the coffin lid. Another approach was to redecorate over the old plaster and paint. Some went the extra step to scrub away old plaster and paint before starting new decoration, but they retained the old modelling in the wood. Some, I suspect, scrubbed the coffin down, dismantled it, and started a new coffin from scratch, using only the wood and thus giving away no trace of an older coffin visible except by means of further scientific examination.

A coffin was essentially meant to make a functional link between the thing and the person – to transform the dead into an eternal Osirian and solar version of him or herself. The coffin was believed to ritually activate the dead. Thus, the wood, paint and plaster were meant to provide an inviolable, idealised, permanent depiction of the person inside. This fetishisation is why coffin reuse is so disturbing to us – these objects have faces, hands and feet, and thus they seem to be human. The ritual spells inscribed on the surface imply that the human stakes were very high – nothing less than providing an eternal afterlife for the dead. Removing a body from the inside and redecorating it for another seems profoundly wrong to us, because we have created an inherent value for that object.

The motivation to acquire a coffin seems to have been so great that reuse rates skyrocket in the 21st Dynasty as access to resources plummeted. Much of this was ideologically driven – the dead needed ritual transformation, and the elite Egyptian mindset demanded materiality to create that transformation through a complicated set of funerary rituals that included the Opening of the Mouth ceremony. But the reuse was also economically driven. Access to high quality wood from the Lebanon or elsewhere was impossible, and people had to look elsewhere for this most basic coffin resource. Social drivers were also essential, as funerary rituals took place in a public or semi-public forum – the families of the dead wanted to display their social place to the world, and they needed coffins to do it.



Painted wooden coffin of Muthotep with detail showing original inscription under later decoration. From Thebes (?), 19th–20th Dynasty (EA 29579).

In the UK

Egyptian hieroglyphs in Wrexham

Ilona Regulski

Curator, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

As part of the British Museum's strategy and approach to sharing its collection, Egyptian objects are loaned to museums around the UK. A previous UK tour of ancient Egyptian objects from the British Museum, *Pharaoh: King of Egypt*, was seen by over 300,000 people. A new exhibition will focus on Egyptian writing, opening in Wrexham this summer.

Egypt's long history produced an astonishing variety of written material representing indigenous as well as foreign languages. Hieroglyphic scripts and their cursive counterparts will be presented next to Coptic, Greek, Arabic and Nubian, and even cuneiform documents, reflecting a multicultural society. Apart from the most common writing supports, such as papyrus and stone, the exhibition will show that almost any kind of object could be inscribed by the ancient Egyptians, from statues to a scribe's pen or pieces of jewellery.

Much of what survived from ancient Egypt reflects the activities of its scribes and the officials. Monumental buildings were erected under their supervision, administrative and economic activities were documented by them, and tales concerning the lower classes or from foreign lands survive thanks to the scribes' efforts. We know very little about the ancient Egyptian education system but writing boards and trial pieces give us a hint that schools and proper training must have existed. Oral and visual copying took place on a large scale, resulting in the survival of numerous copies of classical literature, teaching and poetry.

Numerous written sources help us to understand what the ancient Egyptians thought would happen after death. The netherworld was a mysterious place which the dead person travelled through by foot, by boat or through the air, in different physical forms. Afterlife guides, such as the Book of the Dead, provided the deceased with the required knowledge in order to cross and enter the divine world successfully. All such scribal activity was placed under the supervision and protection of Thoth, the god of wisdom and writing.

The limestone ostrakon (EA 50716) from the workmen's village at Deir el-Medina combines several text genres showing that objects used for scribal training could easily be reused for everyday practice. The front (recto) shows parts of an administrative text (in black) and a copy of a literary text praising the scribal profession (in red). Both are written in a cursive hieratic script typical of the New Kingdom. The sketch of the bull superimposed the literary text so must be later. The back (verso) subsequently records a list of villagers' personal check marks (the so-called 'funny signs'), a well-known practice at Deir el-Medina.

The exhibition Writing for Eternity: Decoding Ancient Egypt is supported through the generosity of the Dorset Foundation and will open in June 2015 in Wrexham and will then travel to further venues in the UK.



Ostrakon with depiction of a bull. From Deir el-Medina, Egypt (EA 50716).

In the UK
Remembering Donald Bailey

Jeffrey Spencer
 Former Deputy Keeper,
 Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

Staff of the British Museum and academic colleagues around the world will be aware of the splendid contribution of Don Bailey to archaeology during more than 40 years as a member of the Department of Greece and Rome. His careful research into the collections was not limited to his own department but encompassed objects across the Museum and especially in what is now the Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan. Always ready to share his expertise, Don became a valued colleague in my own research as well as that of many others. My own collaboration with him expanded significantly when the British Museum began its first excavation in Egypt in 1980, at the site of El-Ashmunein, the ancient Hermopolis Magna, and it was through this project that I came to know him well. Since this site contained multiple levels from Egyptian pharaonic, through Ptolemaic and Roman, to Coptic and Byzantine, it was arranged that both the Department of Egyptian Antiquities, and that of Greek and Roman Antiquities, would participate. The primary representative for the latter department throughout the decade-long project would be Don, and it is no exaggeration to say that without his input, we Egyptologists would have struggled to interpret many of our finds and much of the pottery. Right from the start of the excavation we encountered Late Roman levels full of unfamiliar potsherds which Don would sort, identify and draw. It was a masterclass in African and Egyptian red-slip wares, not to mention the numerous lamps.

Don did far more than deal with pottery, working in the first two seasons with architect Danny Andrews to survey the entire site for a new map. This involved much walking in straight lines through camel-thorn bushes and across crumbling mounds of mud brick, all of which he (quite literally) took in his stride. In later seasons he took charge of an area of the excavation and succeeded in identifying the *Komasterion*, or procession-house of Hermopolis, and also excavated the platform of a nearby Roman temple, discovering an over-life-size granite statue of a 30th Dynasty king in the process.

The living conditions at El-Ashmunein were basic, in a mud-brick house which we constructed around us piecemeal, a task with which Don was always ready to assist. He had a knack of adapting to Egyptian procedures by being able to switch off from any fuss and bother which was going on around him, so avoiding the exasperation these often engendered. Late one night, after we had gone to bed, there was a commotion outside, followed by a knocking at the door. Don was first to get there, opened it to see a man in a suit who said: 'I am Chief of the secret police from El-Minya.' 'Oh how do you do?' said Don, completely unfazed. The same equanimity served him well on a long train journey to Qena and back, arriving in Mallawi late at night and lucky to find a car to bring him to El-Ashmunein. As one of his favoured songs by The Who has it, it was 'just another tricky day'.

The family of Donald Bailey (1931–2014) suggest donations can be made to Admiral Nurses, part of Dementia UK.



Don sorting pottery at El-Ashmunein in 1981.

In the UK
Fine lines, shapes and texture from the stores



Claire Thorne
 Illustrator, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

The illustrative demands for describing archaeological artefacts in publications have changed much over the years, largely governed by printing processes and technology. In the British Museum around 40 years ago, black-and-white line work was made into Photo Mechanical Transfers, cut and pasted alongside typeset copy, then sent as 'mock ups' to the printers. At this same time the Illustrators in the Prehistoric and Early Europe Department created and refined a method of illustrating pottery in their collection using quill and technical pens which is very fine and skilful (English Heritage illustrators were also practising similar methods), but these are seldom used today as it is very time consuming and photography is increasingly viable. The style is fully descriptive, very attractive and adds hugely to the quality and visual appeal of a volume. It references the fine line black-and-white engraving style of the 18th and 19th centuries.

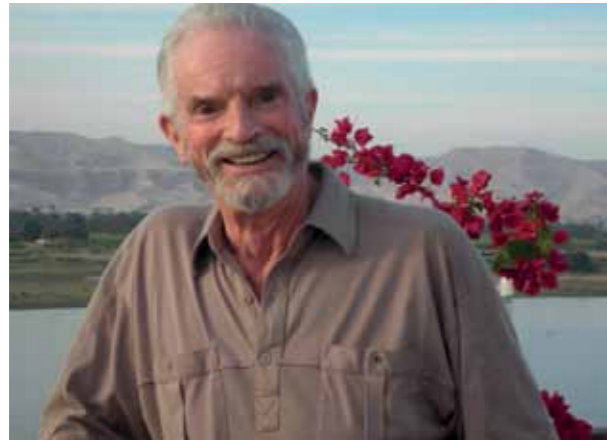
The black-topped red ware, whether of Predynastic or Kerma type, housed in the British Museum's storerooms, has intrigued and attracted me through their unusual shapes and characteristic blackened tops above the red surface, creating a two-toned effect. When arranged side by side on shelves, these pots visually give an undulating rhythm that links them

together but also displays the surprising variety of form and size. There is a slightly accidental feel to how the firing has turned out so this allows more creative freedom and less need to be exact in representation.

With these things in mind I am interested in exploring the design possibilities of these pots and also referencing the old craft-based archaeological drawing style. Graphically speaking, this language of lines and dots with its constraints and subtleties has much potential and it can be easier to experiment and be less literal about it, if working in a different medium such as monoprinting, linocutting, graphite rubbing, and potentially fabric printing. Photoshop being a very useful design tool allows endless playing around with layers to quickly test whether inks and patterns could work out in manually printed transparent layers, although there are always good or bad surprises. Shown here are some beginnings of that process of experimentation involving texture, shapes and colour.

Print based on black-topped pottery from the British Museum's collection.

In the UK
**The Adrian Condie Fund:
 supporting the next generation**



Adrian during a visit to Luxor.

ITP participants with Michelle Hercules, conservator, during a tour of the WCEC.

Neal Spencer
 Keeper, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan

University degrees in Egyptology, or other disciplines, aim to give students a thorough grounding in particular cultures. In the Museum, we are keen that students experience and work with the ancient objects first-hand – rather than through books and images – and also where possible gain experience in fieldwork, to understand where those objects came from. A generous donation given in memory of Adrian Condie will now support the participation of students in British Museum fieldwork projects in Egypt over the coming years.

Adrian, a doctor who specialised in obstetrics and gynaecology, went on to study Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies after retiring from the Edgware General Hospital. This led to him delivering eye-opener tours in the Egyptian galleries until 2006, while being a British Museum Member for over 16 years. This enthusiasm for passing on knowledge about ancient Egypt will now be continued through the Adrian Condie Fund.

It is with great appreciation that we thank Mrs Marjorie Condie and her daughters Alison, Sue and Fiona for setting up a fund at the British Museum in memory of Adrian Condie which will continue to help the development of Egyptology students.

If you would like to learn more about how you can honour a loved one's memory or leave a bequest to the British Museum please contact legacymanager@britishmuseum.org

In the UK
International Training Programme 2014



Claire Messenger and Emma Croft
 International Training Programme

The ninth annual International Training Programme saw 21 museum professionals from 12 countries participate in training sessions in the British Museum and seven UK partner museums, from 5 August to 12 September 2014. We were joined by five colleagues from Egypt and Sudan: Amani Yousif Bashir (director, Sheikan Museum, Sudan), Balsam Abdelhamid Ahmed Shakal (curator, Sudan National Museum), Asmaa Hassan El-Rabat (curator, Egyptian Museum, Cairo), Alaa Ahmed Bakeer (curator, Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo) and Marwa Abdel Fattah Salem Eid (curator, Education Department, Egyptian Museum, Cairo).

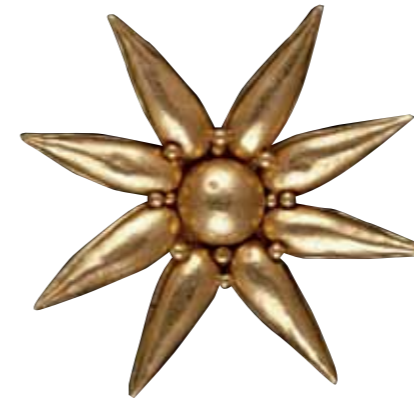
'I have learnt a lot and gained great experience from my time in the ITP, and learnt also that even if I have obstacles and barriers in my home institution I have to never give up. Now I feel so enthusiastic and need to work in an organised way to improve my museum.' Alaa Bakeer

The major highlight of the departmental programme was preparing an exhibition concept, working with curators Anna Stevens, Anna Garnett and Ilona Regulski. This led to the following exhibition proposals:

- Ostrich eggs of Sudan: tradition from past to present (Balsam)*
- Revealing the mystery of amulets (Alaa)*
- Daily life in ancient Egypt in the past and present (Asmaa)*
- A story of hieroglyphic letters (Marwa Salem Eid)*

Amani Bashir, one of our colleagues from Sudan, joined us later in the programme, going straight to her UK partner placement at the Ashmolean Museum before spending two weeks with us in London.

Without the generosity of individuals, companies, trusts and foundations that provide invaluable support, the International Training Programme would not be possible. The participants from Egypt and Sudan were supported by the John S Cohen Foundation, the Barakat Trust, the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust, Mrs Michel David-Weill and the Aall Foundation. For more information on the International Training Programme, visit britishmuseum.org or contact itp@britishmuseum.org



On tour
 In 2015, these objects from the British Museum's collection will be part of exhibitions around the UK and abroad.

Glazed steatite commemorative scarab of Amenhotep III (EA 65428). On display in *Queens of Egypt* (Tokyo and Fukuoka, July – December 2015).

Ivory headrest from Deir el-Bersheh. 12th Dynasty (EA 30727). On loan to exhibition *Between the Old and the New: The Middle Kingdom* (5 October 2015 – 24 January 2016, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).

Gold diadem ornament, from Egypt, 1st–3rd century AD (EA 26328). Part of British Museum touring exhibition *Roman Empire: Power and People* (30 May – 13 September 2015, Segedunum Roman Fort and Baths).

Bone figure with clay beads for hair. 7th–10th century AD (EA 65665). On loan to exhibition *Ein Gott – Abrahams Erben am Nil* (1 April – 13 September 2015, Bode Museum, Berlin).

Further information

Further resources

To search the collection database and download free high-resolution images for non-commercial use, visit britishmuseum.org/research

For information on visiting the Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan's collection, library and archive, click on Departments under 'About us' at britishmuseum.org

For *British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan*, the free online journal presenting the latest research including fieldwork, click on 'Publications' at britishmuseum.org

For membership of the Sudan Archaeological Research Society, and online access to the *Sudan & Nubia* journal, visit sudarchrs.org.uk

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Remembering the British Museum by leaving a gift in your Will, no matter what size, can help us build and care for the collection, support special exhibitions and deliver innovative learning, research and conservation programmes. Click on 'Leave a legacy' under 'Support us' at britishmuseum.org or call 020 7323 8421.

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New publications

Julie Anderson and Derek Welsby (eds),
The Fourth Cataract and Beyond.
Proceedings of the 12th International Conference for Nubian Studies. British Museum Publications on Egypt and Sudan 1. Leuven: Peeters.

Elisabeth R O'Connell (ed.),
Egypt in the First Millennium AD: Perspectives from New Fieldwork.
British Museum Publications on Egypt and Sudan 2. Leuven: Peeters.

Dates for your diary

Sudan Archaeological Research Society Colloquium
Recent archaeological fieldwork in Sudan
11 May 2015

The Raymond and Beverly Sackler
Distinguished Lecture in Egyptology
At the gate of the ancestors: saint cults and the politics of the past at Abydos
Janet Richards, University of Michigan
9 July 2015

The Annual Egyptological Colloquium
Abydos: the sacred land at the western horizon
9–10 July 2015

The Kirwan Memorial Lecture
(Sudan Archaeological Research Society)
Jebel Adda (title tbc)
Krzysztof Grzymalski
7 September 2015

Conference
Egypt and Empire: 30 BC to the present (provisional title)
10–11 December 2015

British Museum exhibitions

The Meroe Head of Augustus: Africa defies Rome
11 December 2014 – 15 February 2015

Bonaparte and the British: prints and propaganda in the age of Napoleon
5 February – 16 August 2015

Music, celebration and healing: the Sudanese lyre
18 June – 16 August 2015

Ancient lives, new discoveries
Until 12 July 2015

One God: three religions on the Nile (provisional title)
29 October 2014 – 14 February 2015

Crocodile mummy (provisional title)
10 December 2015 – 21 February 2016



One curtain (of a pair) with woven and embroidered decoration. From Akhmim, c. AD 600 (EA 29771).

Front cover:
Statue of Neb-hepet-ra,
late 12th Dynasty
(EA 83921).
Acquired with the
assistance of the Art Fund
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