



Issue 27: February 2018

The newsletter of
The
**Southampton
Ancient Egypt
Society**

Review of our January meeting

On Saturday 20 January the New Year was kicked off to a cracking start with a talk on Ancient Egyptian art by the Society's very own **Hilary Wilson**. The title, *'Three into Two Will Go'*, was a reference to the Egyptians' ability to show a three-dimensional object in just two dimensions. Hilary began by asking the audience what it was about Egyptian art that made it instantly recognisable, and then illustrated these elements throughout her talk.



The default position for showing any figure, as with hieroglyphs, was facing the right, but Hilary then illustrated the problems the ancient artists encountered when they had to show a figure facing left. This was illustrated with the use of a 'willing', i.e. co-opted, volunteer. Hilary had found many beautiful examples with which to illustrate her talk and to explain the detail of how the artists accomplished their task. Art is a huge subject and Hilary concentrated on wall paintings and reliefs, otherwise it would have been a very superficial talk, or we would have still been there at midnight. As it was we did not finish until quarter to five and so there was no time for questions, for which Hilary offers her apologies.

Glenn Worthington

January Quiz Answers:

The name of the **odd god out** in each group is shown in **bold** with an explanation.

1: Hathor, Serqet, Neith, Isis – not one of the four goddess guardians of the coffin. The missing goddess is Nephthys.



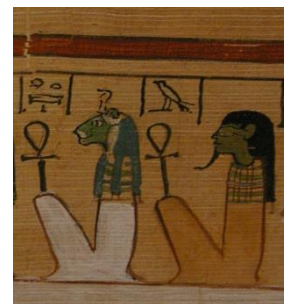
The Four Sons of Horus: L to R:
Qebehsenuef, Hapy, Duamutef, Imsety

2: Hapy, Imsety, Osiris, Qebehsenuef – Osiris was the father of Horus not one of his sons. The missing Son is Duamutef.

3: Isis, Osiris, Nephthys, Nut – Nut was the mother of the other three. Her fourth child was Seth.

4: Hathor, Neith, Sakhmet, Nut – Neith is the only one not shown as a lioness. Being a Lower Egyptian deity, she often wears the Red Crown

Nut as a blue-skinned lioness. BM Papyrus of Ani



5: Hapy, Nut, Serqet, Nun – Serqet, the scorpion goddess, is the only one who is not regularly shown with blue or blue-green skin.

In preparation for our **Study Day** in July, **John Holmes** used our Library to find out about the Ptolemaic Dynasty and came across a biography of one of the lesser known royal ladies of Egypt. Here is what he discovered.

Arsinoë II, daughter of the founder of the Ptolemaic dynasty, Ptolemy I, led a life fraught with uncertainty, pain, and the use and abuse of power. Her early life in Egypt saw her betrothed to a successor of Alexander the Great: Lysimachus, king of Thrace, Macedonia and parts of Asia Minor, and old enough to be her father. She bore him three sons, and after his death in battle she attempted to ensure their claim to their father's throne was upheld. To do this she married one of the rival claimants who then turned against her, killed her two younger sons in front of her, and had her maid dispatched in her stead in a case of 'mistaken identity'. Fleeing to safety in Egypt she married her brother, now ruling as Ptolemy II after the death of their father. This full-blood sibling marriage was the start of a Ptolemaic institution of such marriages and a period of stability and power in her later life.

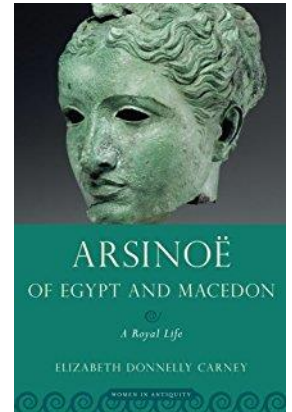


From the death of Alexander in Babylon in 323 BCE until the death of the last of the descendants of his successors, Cleopatra VII in 30 BCE, disarray, uncertainty, and disunity were present and but slowly overcome. Arsinoë II experienced the worst of this era. However, she was also a survivor and utilised the power available to her as a royal wife in a monogamous relationship. The imagery on Ptolemaic coinage, for example, showed her and her husband as equals. The king's wife was represented with symbols borrowed both from the gods and from the king. Arsinoë II was the first Ptolemaic royal woman to have a throne name added to her cartouche: she was designated as 'King of



Upper and Lower Egypt'.

Arsinoë II had no children by Ptolemy II and after her death in about 270 BCE he did not marry again, though he did continue to have royal mistresses.



You can learn more of the life and times of Arsinoë II from book No.200 in our excellent library: '**Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon**' by **Elizabeth Donnelly Carney**.

Study Day Saturday 21 July 2018

Sarah Griffiths, Deputy Editor of *Ancient Egypt Magazine*, will present:

Last of the Pharaohs: Incest, Intrigue & Bloodshed under the Ptolemies and Cleopatras.

Following the conquest of Egypt by Alexander the Great in 332 BC, a succession of kings called Ptolemy ruled Egypt for nearly 300 years, presiding over one of the most remarkable and complex periods in Egyptian history.

This was an era of unprecedented change for Egyptian culture and society as the new dynasty used religion and tradition to increase their power and wealth, and their new cosmopolitan capital, Alexandria, with its world famous library, became the cultural and economic centre of the ancient world.

And yet the House of Ptolemy was a family at war with itself, a complex tangle of relationships based on incest, bitter sibling rivalries, corruption, intrigue and murder, set against a backdrop of foreign wars, civil unrest and the growing influence of Rome.

In this Study Day, **Sarah Griffiths** will paint a vivid picture of Egypt's last ancient dynasty, from Ptolemy I to the famous Cleopatra VII, revealing the absorbing family dramas, exploring their distinctive art and architecture, daily life in Ptolemaic Egypt and the series of catastrophic events that led to the decline of the kingdom and its final annexation by Rome.

Book your place now:

Study Day Fee: SAES Member £20
SAES Junior Member £15
Non-Member £25

Upcoming Events

The next **Informal Evening Meeting** will be on **Friday 23 March** when **Hilary** will give a short talk entitled '**A Prince Among Princes**', a biographical study of **Prince Khaemwase**, son of Ramesses II.



The subject for this year's evening class is '**Pyramids, Fact and Fiction**', an introductory look at the great Pyramid Age of the Dynasties III-VI. The class will run on **Fridays** from **27 April to 25 May**.



Next Meeting: Saturday 17 March

In **Dr Violaine Chauvet's** talk, '**The Ptahshepses-corpus: inspiration in the decoration of an Old Kingdom family tomb cluster**', she will discuss inscribed and decorated material from a cluster of Old Kingdom tombs located north of Djoser's enclosure in Saqqara. Some of this material has found its way in several British collections such as the Marischal Museum, University of Aberdeen, the World Museum, Liverpool, and the British Museum. The characteristics of texts and decoration shared by the tombs share suggest the influence of family patronage or engagement of a single workshop in the design of the monuments.

In the News

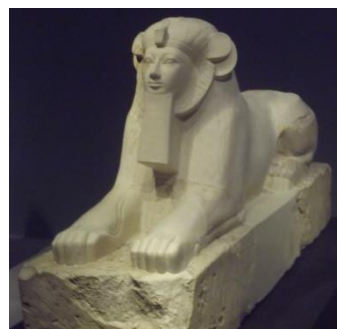
Well-preserved and rare wall paintings found in the tomb of Hetpet, an Old Kingdom priestess of Hathor, were unveiled on February 3, 2018. The 4,400-year-old tomb was discovered during excavation work in Giza's western cemetery by a team of Egyptian archaeologists. "The tomb is in very good condition," said Mostafa Waziri, the Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, "There are coloured depictions of traditional scenes: animals grazing, fishing, bird-catching, offerings, sacrifice, soldiers and fruit-gathering."

<http://www.history.com/news/tomb-discovery-egypt-hetpet-priestess-burial-ground>

Quiz Time

Where is it now?

1) In which museum can you see this sphinx of Hatshepsut?



2) Where can you now see the tallest obelisk known to have been erected in Egypt?

3) In which European city can you see the small temple of Dabod, (below), rescued from the rising waters of Lake Nasser?



4) In which African city can you see the largest known statue of Taharqa?

Answers in the next issue of **Hotep**.

