



HOTEP

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Review of October meeting

Chris Naunton began his talk '*Searching for the Lost Tombs of Egypt: why, how and what next?*' by emphasising how important the discovery of tombs, especially royal tombs, in Egypt has always been to the understanding of ancient Egyptian civilization as well as the promotion of the science of Egyptology. Many significant discoveries would never have been made if it was not for



determined archaeologists and their wealthy sponsors searching for spectacular decorated tombs and the grave goods which commanded high prices on the antiquities market. Some Egyptologists were quite shameless in declaring their

intention to search for particular tombs simply to gain funding for their work. Occasional spectacular finds, such as Schiaparelli's discovery of the tomb of Kha and Meryt at Deir el-Medina and, of course, that of Tutankhamun in the Valley of the Kings, increased the chances of archaeologists receiving further investment in their work. But in spite of many claims of success some tombs of significant Egyptian individuals remain undiscovered or not positively identified. Among the people whose Egyptian tombs are most eagerly sought are Imhotep, architect of the Step Pyramid, Akhenaten and his wife Nefertiti, the priest-king, Herihor, Alexander the Great and Cleopatra VII. In exploring some aspects of the searches for such tombs Chris described how he followed in the footsteps of Iain Mathieson and the Saqqara Survey team. He also showed us previously unpublished images of the colossal statue of Psamtik found recently at Heliopolis. This was a lively and informative talk which served to whet our appetites for Chris' latest book, copies of which

The newsletter of The Southampton Ancient Egypt Society

he brought along and which sold out in a matter of minutes. We hope he can come back again in the not too distant future.

October Quiz Answers

1: Thoth was represented by the **sacred ibis**, a wading bird with a white body, black neck and head and a long down-curved beak, or a **baboon**. Both creatures could be crowned with the lunar disc.

2: The goddess **Hathor** is most commonly associated with a **cow** and may be shown as a woman with the ears of a cow and a crown formed of cow's horns supporting the sun's disc. Hathor was also regularly shown with the head of a **lioness** or as a coiled uraeus **serpent**.

3: The gods **Ra**, **Ptah** and **Montju** were the most prominent gods associated with **bull cults**, respectively the **Mnevis** at **Heliopolis**, the **Apis** at **Memphis** and the **Buchis** at **Hermonthis**.



4: Several gods were represented as a falcon or as a human man with the head of a falcon. If their names cannot be read they may be identifiable by the crowns they wear. The hawk-gods who appear



most frequently in tomb art are:- **Ra-Horakhte**, the supreme sun-god, whose crown is a serpent-encircled sun-disc; **Horus**, Son of Osiris, the royal patron, who wears the Double Crown of Egypt; **Montju**, the warrior god, whose diadem is the Theban crown of

two feathers mounted behind a solar disc; **Khonsu**, the divine child of the Theban triad, who wears the lunar crown; **Qebseuef** is the hawk-headed Son of Horus whose head was used as a lid on the canopic jar which held the intestines... and I'm sure you can find others!



On the small screen

Recently I came across the **Discovery History Channel** series *'Blowing up History'* (Friday 16 November) The particular programme I watched was Episode 4 in Series 2 entitled, *'Mystery of Egypt's Mega-Temple'*.

This proved to be a study of the Karnak Temple complex including information about where the stone for the building was quarried, how it was transported and the engineering techniques employed in raising the giant columns and massive roof beams of the Hypostyle Hall. The presentation was enhanced by some useful animations but some of the expert speculation was typically exaggerated for popular consumption. For example, a great deal was made of pharaohs like Ramesses II 'stealing' the buildings of their predecessors by demolishing them and reusing the stone in their own works – more recycling than theft. I would also take issue with the narrator's assertion that the temple was a seat of state government where foreign dignitaries were received.

There was a very interesting sequence on the identification within the extensive Karnak block field of sections of a relief originally created by Tutankhamun. These are being digitised and recorded with a view to recreating the original wall, using similar but updated techniques to those employed by Donald Redford in his reconstruction of the Aten Temples, and one block was shown being repositioned.

In another section Campbell Price and Lidija McKnight were seen discussing the body and coffin of a temple singer as they explained that the functioning of Karnak depended on and supported a substantial community of all sorts of workers. Finally, the programme described the decline of Karnak in Roman times as Christianity took over from the ancient religion and the temple became home to a substantial domestic settlement. For all its minor inaccuracies and a tendency to over-sensationalise this is a programme which would be worth finding on catch-up.



There is also a new two-part programme *'Egyptian Tomb Hunting'* presented by **Tony Robinson**, coming up on Channel 5, (Tue 27 and Wed 28 November). What I've seen in the trailer looks interesting. If you watch this or any other documentary about Egypt please consider sharing your enjoyment with others by writing a review for Hotep.

Next Meeting Saturday 15 December 2018



Our old friend **John Wyatt** will talk about *'The Other Gifts of the Nile'*, meaning the wildlife supported by the river. In the past we have been royally entertained by John's expert knowledge, especially with respect to Egyptian birdlife, so this promises to be a treat fit for Christmas.

As in previous years, we are happy for members to bring along their home-made crafts or produce for sale, for the sake of a donation to SAES funds.

And finally

Quiz Time

- 1:** Who painted this image→ of a hoopoe in a crack in a temple wall?
- 2:** What is the name of the vulture-goddess in the relief?
- 3:** In which temple can the relief be found?
- 4:** Whose temple is it?



Answers in the next issue of Hotep.

Hilary Wilson

