



Issue 16: February 2017

Review of the January meeting

On Saturday 21 January we welcomed **Alan Reiblein**, from Manchester, to talk about **Egyptian Wall Painting**. He started by explaining how there was a wealth of out-of-copyright material available free of charge from the American Library of Congress which had provided him with many translations of ancient and Classical texts. Alan used extracts from these to give us an overview of how Egyptian art was viewed by the Greeks and how Classical appreciation of non-Greek art influenced the way modern scholars have interpreted Egyptian styles, especially the conventions regarding the portrayal of the human figure. He compared the similar conventions of representing three-dimensional objects in two dimensions adopted by other contemporaneous societies.



Given the topic, we had expected a profusely illustrated talk but sadly this was not the case. Though Alan used some well-known images (e.g. Nebamun, above) to point out a few of the important aspects of Egyptian artistic representation, such as the accuracy with which artists rendered musculature and bodily proportion while employing the part profile part front-view which is so immediately identifiable as Egyptian, he missed opportunities to go into more detail concerning the imagery and the connection between art and the hieroglyphic script, e.g. right-orientation.

The newsletter of The Southampton Ancient Egypt Society

All our speakers are made well aware of the length of our meetings at the time of booking and are asked to prepare a 90-minute presentation. From his website it appeared that Alan was an experienced speaker but his talk was of barely one hour's duration and not as well illustrated as it could have been. When it finished at 3.30 I tried to extend the afternoon by means of questions and some input of my own but I suspect that some members of the audience, which included several visitors who had been drawn to the Society by the appeal of the subject, will have gone away disappointed. If you have had a good, or bad, experience with a talk we would be glad to know because personal recommendation is the best guarantee of finding the best speakers and avoiding the less good.

Hilary

January Quiz Answers:

- 1:** The goddess is **Nut**, goddess of the sky, recognised by the round-bodied vase hieroglyph of her name worn as a crown.
- 2:** Nut's brother-husband was **Geb**, the god of the earth.



The body of the sky-goddess Nut is arched over the recumbent body of the earth-god Geb. The two are kept apart by their father, Shu, the god of the air.
Late Period coffin, Turin

- 3:** Their four children were **Osiris** and **Isis**, **Seth** and **Nephthys**.

From Glenn Worthington

Queen Nefertari's Legs



At the end of November 2016, it was announced that, in all probability, the mummified legs of one of Ramses II's favourite queens had been identified (above).

The tomb of Nefertari was discovered in the Valley of the Queens (QV66) in 1904 by the Italian Ernesto Schiaparelli. As with nearly all tombs Queen Nefertari's had been stripped in antiquity, so all that was discovered was broken furniture, jars, shabtis, a pair of sandals and two mummified legs. All these finds were taken to Turin and housed in the Museo Egizio, but were not scientifically analysed until early in 2016.

(right and below) Views of the scale model of Nefertari's tomb displayed in the Turin Egyptian Museum



The team that analysed the remains included Joann Fletcher from the University of York. Others came from the universities of Zurich, Turin and Adelaide. The legs were subjected to various scientific tests including being X-rayed in the Turin museum using a portable digital X-ray machine. Textile samples taken from around the knee were chemically analysed, DNA was extracted as was some mummified



material which was used for radio-carbon dating.



Other objects from the tomb, which were inscribed with the name of Nefertari or were of a style consistent with a 19th dynasty date, were also analysed. The sandals were used to calculate the height of the individual who wore them. Assuming that they were Nefertari's this gives an estimated height for the Queen of 165 cm (5 ft 6in).

The X-rays of the legs show that the body had suffered badly in the hands of the tomb robbers, revealing massive multiple impacted fractures. Although it cannot be absolutely proved that the two legs are from the same individual, a close visual examination indicates that they do. The chemical analysis is consistent with the materials used in the 19th dynasty, however the DNA was unable to confirm the sex of the individual and the radio-carbon date is older than the historic date for Nefertari. However, the team are as confident as they can be that the legs are those of Queen Nefertari.



The lid of Nefertari's sarcophagus
Turin Egyptian Museum

The full report can be found at;
<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0166571>

Study Day 15 July 2017

An Introduction to Egyptian Astronomy

presented by **Dr Bernadette Brady** from the **University of Wales Trinity Saint David** School of Archaeology, History and Anthropology.

This Study Day is designed to introduce you to the Egyptian sky with its mythic, religious, and civic role in Egyptian society. It will begin with the pyramids of the Old Kingdom and carry through to the Hellenistic period.

By the end of the day you should be able to look at a piece of Egyptian astronomical art or design and recognise its probable intentions and major themes. Handouts will be provided to aid your own study after the event.

Fee for the day:
£20 for SAES Members
£25 for non-Members
Book your place now.

5-week informal evening course
Starts Friday 28 April 7.30 – 9 p.m.



The Gods of Thebes

This course will provide an overview of the deities associated with the city of Thebes, modern Luxor, their origins and mythology. It will include a study of the names, titles and iconography by which these deities may be recognised. Fully illustrated and with no formal assessment this is a course for interest and entertainment only.

Course fee: £20
Places may be booked now

Next Meeting: Saturday 18 March



Dr Paul T. Nicholson, Professor of Archaeology at the School of History, Archaeology and Religion, Cardiff University, will talk about **'The Sacred Animal Necropolis at North Saqqara'**.

This is the resting place of a vast number of animals associated with particular cults. The Apis Bull being the most famous of these creatures. Others include the less well known dogs, cats, ibises and falcons. Many were re-discovered by Professor W.B. Emery in the 1960s and have since been worked on by Professors Smith, Martin and Nicholson. This talk will summarise some of that work and discuss a little of the new work taking place at the Dog Catacomb.

Prof Nicholson has directed work at Tell el-Amarna, Memphis and Saqqara. He is co-author of the *British Museum Dictionary of Ancient Egypt* and co-editor of *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology* (both with Ian Shaw).

Now it's Quiz Time

Match the kings to the names of their wives from the list below. Yes, there are more names than kings!



Mutnedjmet, Nefertiti, Ahotep,
Merytamen, Akhesenamun, Sitamun, Tiye,
Tausert, Nefertari, Tuya, Ahmose

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

