



The Egypt Society of Bristol

NEWS UPDATE

Issue 26

September 2010

Chairman's Dig

The new lecture season begins in a couple of weeks, and we have the usual wide range of lectures - please see enclosed programme. We are particularly happy to welcome Reg Clarke to give the first lecture of the season: he was one of the Bristol evening class students who formed the core of the ESB when it first came into being, and who has gone on to get a degree in Egyptology from Swansea University, where he is now researching for his PhD.

While this newsletter includes a report on Campbell Price's talk back last December, the Vice-Chairman has been unable to produce reports for more recent lectures owing to pressure of work: if any other member(s) would like to come forward to act as *rapporteur*, please get in touch.

The Treasurer and Chairman have (literally) been half way round the world since the last newsletter, including leading a tour to Egypt, a undertaking a lecture tour of Australia and attending an Egyptological museums conference in Tuscany. Sadly we are not scheduled to go far again until next March - when we will be leading a trip to a wide range of sites between Cairo and Asyut, including South Saqqara, the Fayyum and Tell el-Amarna: details are available at <http://www.ancient.co.uk/AWJA030311.aspx>.

The ESB is now hopefully moving forward at last on the conservation of the grave of Amelia Edwards - the founder of the Egypt Exploration Society and the Chair of Egyptology at University College London - in Henbury Churchyard. As can be seen from this photograph it needs a little TLC, which it is intended that the ESB will facilitate.

The grave - including the obelisk - seems originally to have been erected for Sarah Harriet Braysher, the daughter of Amelia's long-term companion, Ellen Braysher, who died in Paris, aged only 32, in Paris in 1864. The bodies of Amelia and Ellen were added following their deaths in 1892, when additional inscriptions were added to the obelisk and the *ankh* placed above the grave.

The Committee should be deciding on a way forward over the next couple of months in conjunction with the church's verger and in consultation with an expert in stone conservation: we will keep you informed of progress

Looking forward to seeing you all soon!



Grave of Amelia Edwards in Henbury Churchyard

Memo from the Museum

Egyptology Collection Online

The museum database is now online at <http://museums.bristol.gov.uk/>. Most of the Egyptology collection is catalogued- just the unprovenanced pots are left to work on.

Volunteers

Dan Jarman has been registering and photographing Egyptian ceramics.

Visitors & Researchers

We regularly receive a wide range of interesting enquiries. Recent research projects have included animal mummy testing (e.g. H3065 & Ha7474: see

photographs); E.E.F. excavations at Tell Defenneh; Cemetery F at Abydos; the building of Siamun at Memphis, and cobra figurines.



Sampling H3065



Sampling Ha7474

New Acquisitions

An Egyptian video by Hala Elkoussy is now on display in the Assyria gallery. This is the museum's first acquisition through Art Fund International. The video is a really interesting work that brings together 25 tales from Cairo.

Cardiff Conservation

A selection of our Egyptian objects are being worked on by conservation students in Cardiff (e.g. H1391- pictured) which was recently returned to us). This provides excellent training for them and means that objects which otherwise would not receive attention are conserved.



H1391 after conservation

New Gallery at the City Museum



A selection of objects from the Ethnographic & Archaeology collections are on display in a new gallery called 'Curiosity' - aimed at our under-7 visitors. A number of Egyptian pots and a Sekhmet figurine are on display here.

Amber Druce

Documentation Assistant, Ethnography and Foreign Archaeology

Lecture Report

15 December 2009. Lecture: *“His effigy as perfect as the ancestors”*: Memory and Materiality in Late Period Elite Statuary
Campbell Price, University of Liverpool

Campbell's work covers sculpture from around 750 BC - the beginning of the 25th Dynasty - to the last century BC - the end of the Ptolemaic period.

Contrary to general opinion he pointed out that there is no fall off of the standard or quality during this period, and certainly no lack of interest to the pieces. Karnak Temple is particularly rich in Late Period elite sculpture mainly due to the discovery of the *Cachette* behind the Seventh Pylon, with its collection of hard stone statues. The *cachette* allows us to assess elite expectations, religious practices and how the elite saw themselves.

A similar cache at Saqqara contained a high percentage of wood statues, mainly due to their preservation in the drier conditions and Herodotus mentions the abundance of Late Period wooden priestly statues that he saw in temples. However, at Karnak, wet conditions meant that no wooden statues have been preserved from the *Cachette*, while limestone ones were also poorly preserved. This has led to an assumption that hard stone was particularly favoured at this period, whereas it is actually a fluke of preservation! Cairo Museum accession register entries (*Journal d'Entree* - JE) were only created for the 'good' hard stone examples from the *Cachette* while limestone fragments were left without entries.



The Cour de la cachette at Karnak

Most of the information available on the statues comes from the Franco-Egyptian mission database. Georges Legrain excavated the *Cachette* in 1903-07 and found 17,000 votive bronzes, stelae, and over 700 statues with over 400 of them dating to the 25th Dynasty or later. While the vast majority of statues made their way to the Cairo Museum, a number were given away as diplomatic gifts while, as Late Period statues were not particularly favoured at that time, some were sold off by the Museum - and some were even stolen. How little they were regarded is highlighted by some labels in the Cairo Museum which state that statues were adorned with simply 'funerary inscriptions of little or no interest'.

Many Egyptologists have studied the inscriptions with the prime concern of recording names and titles, as many contain important

genealogies. However, a lack of space meant that a shorthand formula was used 'son of the like-titled' for inherited titles. Another common formula used is 'I, son of ... causes his name to live' indicating the importance of memory in these inscriptions. A second approach to the statues has been the art historical perspective where styles were assumed to be in decline but that they should be seen as having aesthetic value ignoring their context, use or reason for being.

The most common statue form in the Late Period through to the Ptolemaic Period is the block statue. The material properties of them are seemingly not of prime importance but the block statue is less vulnerable to damage and has larger areas available for inscriptions. Inscriptions reveal that being favoured by the gods such as 'He [Amun] allows me to be in the place of my desire' and the desire for memory 'my form in the interior of his house for eternity' and 'united with the god's *kas* placing my back against the wall of his house' were a vital part of their purpose.

All these texts on the front of the statue are addressed to the public, whereas those addressed to the gods are hidden on the backs. It was also clearly expected that physical offerings were to be given to the statues, partly through the concept of 'reversion of the offerings' to the gods, who 'hear praises of his followers eat and drink from offerings of his temple'. Given the number of inscriptions asking people to clean the statues, offerings may also have been physically placed on them.

As far as the materiality of the statues goes it is clear that the physical reality of the statue as a person who is offered to, taken care of and even given favoured attention too whilst almost being divinized was seen as a part of a community of people and gods. They were seen as participating for eternity in the metaphysical actions of the temple. Statues were generally set up by the son for the father to 'make his name live' asserting the rights for his descendants. Those individuals with wealth, power and resources set many of their own statues up rather than waiting. One Chief Lector Priest (Padiamenopet) had a large tomb in the Asasif as well as setting up many statues in archaic styles and stones with a formula probably copied from Middle Kingdom statues, stating that they were a 'gift of the king'. It seems there was a form of kudos to be had from copying archaic styles and texts and, of course, there were many statues and texts available at Karnak for inspiration.

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Egypt Society of Bristol Programme and other events of interest in the area

October 2010 – June 2011

All lectures are held in Lecture Room 1, Department of Archaeology & Anthropology, 43 Woodland Road, Clifton, at 1845. Entry for members is free, £2.00 for non-members; 'wine and nibbles' afterwards are available for a nominal fee of £1.00.

Tue 12 October 2010. Lecture: *Kheker Friezes - what's the point?*.
Reg Clark, Swansea University

Tue 16 November 2010. Lecture: *Beni Hasan: a Middle Kingdom provincial cemetery*
Prof. Sara Orel, Truman State University, Missouri, USA

Tue 14 December 2010. Lecture: *Popular Worship in Egyptian Temples: Images of the Rekhyt*
Ken Griffin, Swansea University

Tue 11 January 2011. Lecture: *The Enigma of the 'Unguent Cone'*.
Joan Padgham, Swansea University

Tue 15 February 2011. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING at 1830 hrs, followed by:
Lecture: *Poisoned Legacy: the Fall of the Nineteenth Egyptian Dynasty*.
Dr Aidan Dodson, University of Bristol, followed by WINTER PARTY.

Tue 29 March 2011. Lecture: *Abu Simbel: exploring and understanding the temples*
Dr Robert Morkot, University of Exeter

Tue 10 May 2011. Lecture: *Ancient Egypt in National Museums Liverpool*
Dr Ash Cooke, Curator of Egypt & the Near East, & Head of Antiquities, National Museums Liverpool

Tue 21 June 2011. Lecture: *Title TBA*
Dr Troy Segrillo, Lecturer in Egyptology, Swansea University.

Summer 2011 - date TBA: Day trip: *Highclere Castle, home of the Earls of Carnarvon, including a redisplayed exhibition of material excavated by the fifth Earl and Howard Carter.*

