

ARCL0147: Themes and Debates in Egyptian Archaeology

2023–2024, Term 2

MA module, option, 15 credits, Term II, Tuesday 11:00–13:00, Room B13



Coordinator: Claudia Näser

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Office hours: tbc

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING ASSESSMENTS:

The **coursework coversheet** is available on the Moodle page of the module and here: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students> under “Policies, Forms and Guidelines”.

Please enter **your five-digit candidate code on the coversheet and in the subject line** when you upload your work in Moodle.

Please use **your five-digit candidate code as the name of the file** you submit.

Please refer to <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-student-handbook/13-information-assessment>

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-study-skills-guide/referencing-effectively-and-ioa-guidelines>

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/exams-and-assessments/academic-integrity>

<https://library-guides.ucl.ac.uk/referencing-plagiarism/acknowledging-AI>

for instructions on coursework submission, IoA referencing guidelines and marking criteria, as well as UCL policies on penalties for late submission, over-length work, the use of text generation software (AI) and academic misconduct.

Module description

The module explores major themes and debates in Egyptian archaeology, aiming to expand them by relating Egyptian evidence to research agendas from wider archaeology, history and social anthropology. The module is research-led throughout.

Module aims

The aims of the module are:

- to facilitate understanding of social-cultural mechanisms and trajectories of Egyptian society in a long-term perspective
- to integrate Egyptology with debates in the wider social and cultural sciences
- to advance critical engagement with disciplinary reconstructions of the past
- to define innovative research designs in the context of ancient Egypt.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the course, students should be able to:

- be familiar with analytical approaches relevant for understanding early complex societies
- critically assess the potential and the challenges of evidence from Ancient Egypt for understanding early complex civilizations
- apply research models of the social and cultural sciences to data from ancient Egypt
- combine texts, images and other material culture within coherent frameworks of interpretation
- assess reasonably and critically multiple sources
- use library/archival facilities independently and competently
- solve problems based on real data sets
- produce reasoned and structured arguments supported by relevant evidence
- make effective and appropriate use of various forms of visual presentation.

Methods of assessment

This module is assessed by means of (i) a book review of 1500 words contributing 40% to the final grade of the module, and (ii) an essay of 2500 words contributing 60% to the final grade of the course.

Communications

Moodle is the main hub for this module. Important information will be posted by the module coordinator in the **Announcements section of the Moodle page** and you will automatically receive an email notification for these.

Please post general queries relating to module content, assessments and administration **in the participants' forum**. For personal queries, please contact the coordinator by email: c.naeser@ucl.ac.uk.

Week-by-week summary

1	Writing archaeological narratives – writing history	9 January 2024
2	Understanding state formation	16 January 2024
3	Cultural constructions of death	23 January 2024
4	Conceptualising ancient Egyptian kingship	30 January 2024
5	Models of social organisation: elite and non-elite, court and province, etc.	6 February 2024
6	Reading week	
7	Settlement archaeology: exploring agency in everyday life	20 February 2024
8	Imperialism, colonialism and empire: Egypt's foreign politics	27 February 2024
9	The past as a resource: Archaism and imitation	5 March 2024
10	(Re)constructing identities	12 March 2024
11	Modelling culture breaks: The appropriation of Christianity	19 March 2024

Lecturers

This module is taught by Claudia Näser (CN). Guest lectures are given by Wolfram Grajetzki (WG) and Cary Martin (CM).

Weekly Module Plan

The module is taught through a series of ten two-hour thematic classes which integrate lectures and discussion-based components. Students will be required to undertake set readings and complete pre-class activities in order to be able to actively participate in the discussion.

Workload

This is a 15-credit module which equates to 150 hours of learning time including session preparation, background reading, and researching and writing your assignments. With that in mind you should expect to organise your time in roughly this way:

20 hours	Staff-led teaching sessions (lectures)
60 hours	Self-guided session preparation and follow-up work (reading, processing pre-recorded material, other online and/or offline activities), about 6 hours per week
25 hours	Reading for, and writing, the book review
45 hours	Reading for, and writing, the essay

2 ASSESSMENT

Each assignment and possible approaches to it will be discussed in class, in advance of the submission deadline. If students are unclear about the nature of an assignment, they should discuss this with the module co-ordinator in advance (via office hours or class Moodle forum). You will receive feedback on your written coursework via Moodle, and have the opportunity to discuss your marks and feedback with the co-ordinator in their office hours.

For more details see the 'Assessment' section on Moodle. The coursework coversheet is available on the Moodle page of the module and here: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students> under "Policies, Forms and Guidelines".

Please make sure you enter your five-digit candidate code on the coversheet and in the subject line when you upload your work in Moodle.

Please use your five-digit candidate code as the name of the file you submit.

The [IoA marking criteria](#) can be found in the IoA Student Handbook (Section 13: Information on assessment). The [IoA Study Skills Guide](#) provides useful guidance on writing different types of assignment.

Please note that **late submission, exceeding the maximum word count and academic misconduct (unacknowledged use of text generation software and plagiarism)** will be penalized and can significantly reduce the mark awarded for the assignment and/or overall module result. Please do consult

- <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-student-handbook/13-information-assessment> with sections 13.7–13.8: coursework submission, 13.10: word count, 13.12–14: academic integrity
- <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/exams-and-assessments/academic-integrity> for UCL's guidance on academic integrity
- <https://library-guides.ucl.ac.uk/referencing-plagiarism/acknowledging-AI> for UCL's guidance on how to acknowledge the use of text generation software.

Assessment 1: Book review (1,500 words)

This assessment contributes 40% to the final grade for the module.

The submission deadline is **midnight Friday 23 February 2024 on Turnitin**. The marked review will be returned to the students by 23 March 2024.

Assessment title: Book review.

Assessment task: Review a single-authored or an edited book you choose in agreement with the module coordinator. A (non-exhaustive) list of potential titles will be provided on Moodle. Discuss your choice with the module coordinator **by 9 February 2024**.

The nature of the assignment and possible approaches to it will be discussed in class, in advance of the submission deadline.

Please note: The use of software to generate content or for language and writing review and improvement (except as required by disability) is **not allowed for this assessment** and will be penalized.

Assessment 2: Essay (2,500 words)

This assessment contributes 60% to the final grade for the module.

The submission deadline is **midnight Tuesday 23 April 2024 on Turnitin**. The marked essay will be returned to the students by 23 May 2024.

Please note: The use of software to generate content is not allowed for this assessment and will be penalized. The use of software for language and writing review and improvement is permitted, and **the software and the way it has been used must be indicated in the relevant boxes on the coursework coversheet**. UCL defines language and writing review as checking "areas of academic writing such as structure, fluency, presentation, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and language translation".

Choose ONE of the following questions (**PLEASE USE THE EXACT TITLE, NOT AN APPROXIMATION**):

- Is microhistory a useful approach to writing ancient Egyptian history? Where do you see its potentials and limitations? Discuss on the basis of two or three case studies.
- How important was writing as a cultural technique for the development of the early Egyptian state in the 4th and early 3rd millennia BC?
- How do Egyptological discussions of ancient Egyptian kingship relate to anthropological concepts of royal power and rule?
- Is it possible to reconstruct the structure of ancient Egyptian society from mortuary evidence? Discuss on the basis of two or three case studies.
- Material, textual and pictorial evidence has been, and continues to be, used to explore ancient Egyptian concepts of the afterlife. Discuss the potentials and challenges of these categories of sources, based on one or two case studies.
- What are the challenges and the potentials of the application of quantitative analyses in Egyptian archaeology? Discuss under reference to one or two case studies.
- Is the search for agency a useful approach to studying archaeological evidence from ancient Egypt?
- Discuss the relationships between Egypt and societies of the Middle Nile valley in either the Old, Middle or New Kingdom. How have recent research and new approaches changed earlier understandings?
- Do you agree that 1st millennium BC archaism is a response to the decline of Pharaonic traditions in Egypt? Discuss based on case studies from the 25 and/or the 26 Dynasties.
- Is the concept of identity useful for the study of Egyptian society in Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt? Discuss with two one or two case studies from either or both periods.

3 RESOURCES AND PREPARATION FOR CLASS

Preparation for class

You are expected to **read the Essential Readings and undertake pre-class activities on Moodle or Talis Elevate each week**. Completing these is essential for your effective participation in the activities and discussions that we will have in class, and it will greatly enhance your understanding of the material covered.

Further readings are provided on the Online Reading List for you to get a sense of the range of resources on a specific site and current research on a given topic, and for you to draw upon for your assessments. The Online Reading List is accessible through the Moodle page of the module, or directly here: <https://rl.talis.com/3/ucl/lists/6F6804DA-5470-1473-233E-3B0FFB6F9459.html>.

When reading the Essential Readings and undertaking other pre-class online activities it is helpful to take notes for discussion in class and consider:

- the wider significance of the topic explored, also in relation to topics discussed in previous weeks and in other modules
- the theoretical and methodological approaches to the topic which different researchers employ, their potentials, limitations and challenges
- the results and conclusions of the research undertaken and their implications for our understanding of ancient Egypt.

Recommended basic texts and online resources

General reference works for the module as a whole, with useful bibliographies. **Refer to this list for background research for essays.**

Introductions and overviews: Ancient Egypt

Assmann, J. 2002. *The Mind of Egypt: History and Meaning in the Time of the Pharaohs*. Translated by A. Jenkins. New York: Metropolitan Books. EGYPTOLOGY B 12 ASS

Baines, J. 2007. *Visual and Written Culture in Ancient Egypt*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. EGYPTOLOGY B 20 BAI; ISSUE DESK IOA BAI

Baines, J. 2013. *High Culture and Experience in Ancient Egypt*. Sheffield: Equinox. EGYPTOLOGY B 12 BAI

Bard, K.A. 2015. *An Introduction to the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt*. 2nd edition. Malden, Mass., Oxford, Carlton: Blackwell. **E-BOOK**. 1st edition (2007) in library EGYPTOLOGY A 5 BAR, IOA ISSUE DESK BAR 29

Eyre, C. 2013. *The Use of Documents in Pharaonic Egypt*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. EGYPTOLOGY B 20 EYR

Hornung, E., R. Krauss and D.A. Warburton (eds) 2006. *Ancient Egyptian Chronology*. Handbook of Oriental Studies 83. Leiden, Boston: Brill. **E-BOOK**, EGYPTOLOGY B 10 HOR. For chronological issues and a detailed discussion of the kinglist

Kemp, B.J. 2018. *Ancient Egypt. Anatomy of a Civilization*. 3rd edition. Milton, New York: Routledge. Read pp. 231–244. **E-BOOK**

Lloyd, A.B. (ed.) 2010. *A Companion to Ancient Egypt*. 2 vols. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell. **E-BOOK**, EGYPTOLOGY A 5 LLO

Lloyd, A.B. 2014. *Ancient Egypt: State and Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. **E-BOOK**, EGYPTOLOGY B 5 LLO

Sasson, J.M. et al. (eds) 1995. *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson. INST ARCH DBA 100 SAS; MAIN LIBRARY ANCIENT HISTORY QUARTOS B 5 SAS

Shaw, I. (ed.) 2003. *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*. New edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press. **E-BOOK**, EGYPTOLOGY B 5 SHA and ISSUE DESK SHA (2000 edition)

Trigger, B.G. 1993. *Early Civilizations: Ancient Egypt in Context*. Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press. INST ARCH BC 100 TRI; ISSUE DESK IOA TRI 6

Trigger, B.G., B.J. Kemp, D. O'Connor and A.B. Lloyd 1983. *Ancient Egypt. A Social History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. **E-BOOK**, EGYPTOLOGY B 5 TRI

Wendrich, W. (ed.) 2010. *Egyptian Archaeology*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell. **E-BOOK**, EGYPTOLOGY A 6 WEN, IOA ISSUE DESK

Encyclopedias: Ancient Egypt

Bard, K.A. 1999. *Encyclopedia of the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt*. London: Routledge. EGYPTOLOGY A 2 BAR; ISSUE DESK IOA BAR 17

Helck, W. and E. Otto (eds) 1975ff. *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz. EGYPTOLOGY A 2 LEX. Includes English, German and French articles.

Redford, D.B. (ed.) 2001. *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. **E-BOOK**, EGYPTOLOGY A 2 OXF

Porter R. and R.L.B. Moss 1960–1975. *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings*. 7 volumes. Originally compiled by R. Porter and R.L.B. Moss, hence nicknamed the "Porter/Moss". EGYPTOLOGY A 1 POR. <http://topbib.griffith.ox.ac.uk//index.html>

UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology: http://escholarship.org/uc/nelc_uee

Sources for maps, with useful background and bibliographies

Baines, J. and J. Málek 2000. *Cultural Atlas of Ancient Egypt*. Revised edition. New York: Fact on file. EGYPTOLOGY QUARTOS A 2 BAI; ISSUE DESK IOA BAI 2

Manley, B. 1996. *The Penguin Historical Atlas of Ancient Egypt*. London et. al.: Penguin. EGYPTOLOGY A 2 MAN

Introductions and overviews: Social anthropology, cultural history, sociology

Barnard, A. and J. Spencer (eds) 1996. *Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*. London: Routledge. INST ARCH BD BAR, SCIENCE LIBRARY ANTHROPOLOGY A 2 BAR (new 2002 edition)

Bennett, T. and J. Frow (eds) 2008. *The SAGE Handbook of Cultural Analysis*. London: SAGE. **E-BOOK**, SCIENCE LIBRARY ANTHROPOLOGY D 2 BEN

Bonnell, V.E. and L. Hunt 1999. *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press. **E-BOOK**, STORE F.L.S. A 6:5 BON

Burke, P. 2008. *What is Cultural History?* 2nd edition. Cambridge: Polity. MAIN LIBRARY HISTORY 6 a BUR

Elliott, A. 2009. *Contemporary Social Theory: An Introduction*. London: Routledge. **E-BOOK**, SCIENCE LIBRARY ANTHROPOLOGY D 10 ELL

Eriksen, T.H. 2010. *Small Places, Large Issues: An Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology*. 3rd edition. London: Pluto. **E-BOOK**, SCIENCE LIBRARY ANTHROPOLOGY D 2 ERI

Ingold, T. (ed.) 2002. *Companion Encyclopedia of Anthropology*. New edition. London: Routledge. **E-BOOK**, INST ARCH BD ING and ISSUE DESK IOA ING 2; SCIENCE LIBRARY ANTHROPOLOGY A 2 ING

Rapport, N. and J. Overing 2007. *Social and Cultural Anthropology: The Key Concepts*. 2nd edition. London: Routledge. **E-BOOK**, INST ARCH BD RAP

Seidman, S. and J.C. Alexander (eds) 2008. *The New Social Theory Reader*. 2nd edition. London: Routledge. SCIENCE LIBRARY ANTHROPOLOGY D 10 SEI

Databases, online catalogues, open access resources, link lists

<https://library-guides.ucl.ac.uk/az.php?a=o> Online Egyptological Bibliography (OEB); access through UCL Library Services: scroll down the alphabetical list until you find the database

<http://www.ancientworldonline.blogspot.com/> Portal for open access electronic resources

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/museums-static/digitalegypt/> Digital Egypt for universities run by UCL

<https://uee.cdih.ucla.edu/> UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology

<http://www.britishmuseum.org/> The British Museum

<http://petriecat.museums.ucl.ac.uk/> Online catalogue of the Petrie Museum

<http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/er/index.html> Comprehensive list of Egyptological online resources run by the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

<http://www.sefkh.net/Oxford-Net-Res.html> Comprehensive list of Online Egyptological resources run by Griffith Institute, Oxford

Libraries and other resources

Most of the books and articles recommended for reading are available in the library of the Institute of Archaeology. Other useful libraries include:

UCL libraries: <http://library.ucl.ac.uk/>

British Library: http://explore.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/search.do?vid=BLVU1

Senate House Library: <https://www.senatehouselibrary.ac.uk/>

Egypt Exploration Society (for members only): <https://www.ees.ac.uk/library>

4 SYLLABUS

1 Writing archaeological narratives – writing history (CN)

The study of early complex societies falls in between archaeology focussing on material culture, history deriving arguments from the written evidence and anthropology investigating the trajectory of social entities and their cultural constituents. Although neither essence nor borders of these disciplines are as fixed as suggested here, it remains difficult to accommodate Egyptology and Egyptian archaeology easily in any of these disciplines. One reason is the specific range of sources used. Egyptian archaeology, and the study of early complex societies more generally, builds in equal terms on material culture, texts and analogies drawn from intercultural comparisons, each having unique potential and limitations.

This class offers an overview over the approaches to our field of study – ancient Egyptian 'society' and 'culture'. We will explore how social and cultural studies and archaeology define these terms. We will also discuss how sources about ancient Egypt can be, and have been, integrated within broader syntheses.

Archaeologists working in or on Egypt have been argued to primarily deal with the remains of elites, i.e. with the culture of a small percentage of the overall past population which is, however, taken to represent society as a whole. This 'monumental bias' and the reliance on texts impeded the development and application of archaeological theory and methodology in Egyptian contexts. That ancient Egypt has not taken its full place in global archaeology is also due to lingering assumptions about the uniqueness of the Pharaonic culture and problematic definitions of its relationship with earlier and later historical periods along the Nile. While textual evidence, political history and the history of ideas dominate conventional Egyptology, we will investigate a wider range of approaches and sources, asking how their integration will influence our understanding and interpretations of 'ancient Egypt'.

Essential reading

Moreno García, J.C. 2018. Microhistory. In Dieleman, J. and W. Wendrich (eds). *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/6fr8p2hb>

Trafton, S. 2004. *Egypt Land: Race and Nineteenth-Century American Egyptomania*. Durham, NC, London: Duke University Press. Read Chapter 1: Introduction. **E-BOOK**, EGYPTOLOGY A 8 TRA

2 Understanding state formation (CN)

A major process in global history is the emergence of complex societies integrated on a larger scale than their prehistoric forerunners. The making of pharaohs, the Egyptian kings, lies at the heart of this development. It is the result of growing social stratification during the Predynastic (c. 4300–3300 BC)

and Early Dynastic period (c. 3300–2800 BC) and embedded in the rapid development of new ways of display and communication.

In this class, we will address the changes the Egyptian society underwent from the fifth to the early third millennia BC, i.e. the period broadly encompassing the widespread adoption of domesticated animals and plants, and the development of the early Egyptian state. We will consider the nature of the archaeological evidence for a variety of social developments and technological innovations, including the emergence of writing. We will analyse competing interpretive approaches to this evidence and the resulting narratives about state formation in Egypt – which we will then situate within the wider archaeological and anthropological debates about the emergence of early states.

Essential reading

Wengrow, D. 2006. *The Archaeology of Early Egypt. Social Transformations in North-East Africa, 10,000–2650 BC*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Read Chapter 4 "The urbanization of the dead, Naqada I-II". **CHAPTER 4 DIGITISED READING**, EGYPTOLOGY B11 WEN and ISSUE DESK IOA WEN 7

Regulski, I. 2016. The origins and early development of writing in Egypt. *Oxford Handbooks Online*. <http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935413.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199935413-e-61>

3 Cultural constructions of death (CN)

The archaeology of ancient Egypt relies heavily on the evidence from cemeteries and tombs for the reconstruction of, not only ritual practices relating to death and burial, but also wider social, religious and economic phenomena which are poorly attested in other parts of the archaeological record. In exploring these issues, a critical and theoretically informed attitude to the interpretation of funerary remains and their transformations over time is required. In this class we will consider both older and newer approaches to the interpretation of the Egyptian burial record, their relationship to broader streams of archaeological theory ('processual' and 'post-processual') and their respective strengths and weaknesses. We will also discuss the concepts of "cultural biographies of objects" and "social lives of things" and see whether they can be helpful in these enquiries.

Jan Assmann stated that "death is the origin and the center of culture". We will follow up this proposition and explore the position of death and burial in the lives of the ancient Egyptians. We will investigate the interpretive opportunities and challenges which arise from this "Sitz im Leben". What significance should we attach to alterations in funerary practice over time, e.g. changes in tomb forms, burial equipment and treatments of the body? Do they testify to rephrasings of cultural norms and representations, changes in religious concepts, or shifts in social structure and the differential access to resources?

Essential reading

Näser, C. 2013. Equipping and stripping the dead. A case-study on the procurement, compilation, arrangement, and fragmentation of grave inventories in New Kingdom Thebes. In: Tarlow, S. and L. Nilsson Stutz (eds). *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of Death and Burial*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 643–661. **E-BOOK**, ISSUE DESK IOA TAR1

Nyord, R. 2018. Taking ancient Egyptian mortuary religion seriously? Why would we, and how could we?, *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections* 17, 73–87. **E-RESOURCE**

Pinch, G. 2003. Redefining funerary objects. In: Hawass, Z.A. and L. Pinch Brock (eds). *Egyptology at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century. Proceedings of the Eight International Congress of Egyptologists, Cairo, 2000*. Volume 2: History, Religion. Cairo and Chichester: American University in Cairo Press and Wiley, 443–447. EGYPTOLOGY A 6 CON

4 Conceptualising ancient Egyptian kingship (CN)

Egyptologists have tended to identify kingship as the heart of ancient Egyptian society. It was a prime reference point for the court and regional governors, and its institutions and imagery often had visible impact on wider groups. In this class we will explore the specificity of ancient Egyptian kingship, analysing Egyptological debates and relating them to anthropological concepts of royal power and rule. We will investigate how both these disciplinary traditions may help, but also limit, our understanding of the institution of 'pharaoh' and its representations.

The rich and seemingly explicit monumental, written and pictorial record has made rulership a central topic of Egyptological research. From early on, it was registered as a prominent example of 'divine kingship'. We will integrate the cosmological dimension inherent in this definition with political aspects of 'Pharaonic' power and authority in order to build an understanding of the complex relationships of kingship, state and religion. Taking up points discussed in the class on state formation (Week 2), we will explore whether the divine nature of kingship was an integral part of the power apparatus which we call state or should be seen as a state religion employed to legitimate pre-existing power relations.

In order to avoid the essentialist assumption of an unchanging Egypt, we will follow the trajectory of the forms of kingship through time and contextualise these within a framework of wider social phenomena. The different ways in which rulers from outside Egypt adapted, or were adapted by, ancient Egyptian kingship provide additional evidence on dimensions of rulership, legitimisation and the power of imagery. The class on identity (Week 10) will provide further perspectives on this point.

Finally, we will explore whether a specifically archaeological perspective will be helpful for conceptualising Egyptian kingship. If there were no texts, how would kingship be recognisable in the archaeological record and how would the patterns exposed in the material culture influence our interpretations of the position and the role of the king in Egyptian society?

Essential reading

Spencer, J. 2002. Kingship. In: Barnard, A. and J. Spencer (eds). *Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*. London: Routledge, 310–311. INST ARCH BD BAR, SCIENCE LIBRARY ANTHROPOLOGY A 2 BAR, **DIGITISED READING**

Abélès, M. 2002. State. In: Barnard, A. and J. Spencer (eds). *Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*. London: Routledge, 527–530. INST ARCH BD BAR, SCIENCE LIBRARY ANTHROPOLOGY A 2 BAR, **DIGITISED READING**

Richards, J. 2010. Kingship and legitimation. In: Wendrich, W. (ed.). *Egyptian Archaeology*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 55–84. **E-BOOK**, EGYPTOLOGY A 6 WEN, IOA ISSUE DESK

5 Models of social organisation: elite and non-elite, court and province, etc. (WG)

The designation 'Egyptian culture' is a unifying way of referring to core elements of ancient Egyptian individual and collective sociocultural practices and their material products. It overwrites social, spatial and chronological diversity and has repercussions for representing and understanding social and cultural change.

Egyptologists have tried to describe the make-up of ancient Egyptian society in various ways. In this class we will explore prominent models, which usually evolve around a dichotomy: between elite and non-elite, court and province, etc. We will expose the roots of these models and how they make sense of the Egyptian evidence. While some models have an explicitly sociological background, such as the concept of 'elite' and 'non-elite', others were formed from the analysis of the Egyptian textual and archaeological record, using criteria such as literacy or access to and use of specific cultural resources, such as monumental decorated tombs, to define social positions. We will discuss these approaches

using fresh Egyptian evidence and explore the potentials and challenges which their application brings about in these contexts.

Essential reading

Grajetzki, W. 2008. Class and society: Positions and possessions. In: Wendrich, W. (ed.). *Egyptian Archaeology*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 180–199. **E-BOOK**, EGYPTOLOGY A 6 WEN, IOA ISSUE DESK

Seidlmayer, S.J. 2006. People at Beni Hassan: Contributions to a model of ancient Egyptian rural society. In: Hawass, Z. and J. Richards (eds). *The Archaeology and Art of Ancient Egypt. Essays in Honor of David B. O'Connor*. Volume 2. Cairo: Supreme Council of Antiquities, 351–368. EGYPTOLOGY A 6 OCO, **DIGITISED READING**

Reading Week: no teaching

7 Settlement archaeology: exploring agency in everyday life (CN)

Egypt has an exceptionally rich record in settlement sites and related find material. Starting from Flinders Petrie, archaeologists have explored this evidence to learn about everyday life, elite and non-elite, from the predynastic, Pharaonic and more recent past. Recent research has added theoretical and methodological issues to these studies. The cultural turn in social sciences, echoed in post-processual archaeology, has moved away from quantitative analyses – instead highlighting the importance of agency and the choices individuals make in shaping their social world and the positions they take in it. Focussing on the case-studies of Amarna and Deir el-Medina, we will explore how archaeologists have used the evidence from these sites to reconstruct aspects of everyday life and embed social practice and agency in them. We will discuss the methodological and theoretical potential and challenges of their approaches.

We will also investigate where the lives of elite and non-elite members of society were separated and where they converged, returning to issues of social stratification and differential access to and use of cultural resources brought up in Week 5 apropos the analysis of elite tomb decoration.

Essential reading

Gardner, A. 2004. Introduction. Social agency, power, and being human. In: Gardner, A. (ed.). *Agency Uncovered: Archaeological Perspectives of Social Agency, Power, and Being Human*. London: UCL Press, 1–15. **DIGITISED READING**, INST ARCH AH GAR; ISSUE DESK IOA GAR 7

Shaw, I. 1992. Ideal homes in ancient Egypt: The archaeology of social aspiration, *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 2, 147–166. **E-RESOURCE**

8 Imperialism, colonialism and empire: Egypt's foreign politics (CN)

Through all periods of history, Egypt and its neighboring societies were closely entangled economically, culturally and politically. This class explores the dynamics of these interactions as well as the interests which drove them. Using the case study of the Middle Nile valley (often called "Nubia") we will investigate how Egyptians defined and pursued their interests beyond their country's borders. We will discuss which resources Egyptian rulers commanded and how they used them to dominate foreign territories and their peoples, and how these constellations changed through time.

Egyptologists made sense of these phenomena in the framework of imperialism and colonialism. New Kingdom Egypt is often called an empire. But what do these terms signify? We will explore how recent

archaeological evidence, reinterpretations of historical records and a critical engagement with theories and models from modern history and political sciences change our understanding of the dynamics described with these terms. One of the shifts in perspective is effected by employing concepts like identity and agency to emphasize the active role local people played in these relationships and to explore how they asserted their interests vis-à-vis the Egyptians. Another shift evolves around studying the everyday lives of both occupiers and members of local societies under Egyptian rule. The class will use data from research projects of the module coordinator – including ongoing fieldwork in one of the two surviving Egyptian fortresses of the Middle Kingdom in Lower Nubia – to reflect on these issues.

Essential reading

Kemp, B.J. 1979. Imperialism and empire in New Kingdom Egypt (c. 1575–1087 B. C.). In: Garnsey, P.D.A. and C.R. Whittaker (eds). *Imperialism in the Ancient World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 7–57. **E-BOOK**, ANCIENT HISTORY M 61 GAR

Smith, S.T. 1997. State and empire in the Middle and New Kingdoms. In: Lustig, J. (ed.). *Anthropology and Egyptology: A Developing Dialogue*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press: 66–89. **DIGITISED READING**, EGYPTOLOGY QUARTOS A 9 LUS

9 The past as a resource: Archaism and imitation (CN)

For the most part of the first millennium, Egypt was ruled by other polities, i.e. the Libyans, the Kushites, the Assyrians, the Persians, the Greeks and finally the Romans. Pharaonic traditions, however, remained comparatively stable. In some cases, there is good evidence for Egyptians in the Late Period directly copying older images, styles and texts. The usual argument is that the alienation from Pharaonic traditions in this period prompted archaism.

Following up on previous discussions on kingship, representation and agency, this class takes a critical look at this understanding. We will explore issues of terminology, such as the differences between archaism, renaissance, canonisation and classicism, and embed the archaising phenomena in a broader context of the imitation of models, past and contemporaneous, elite and other.

Essential reading

Morkot, R. 2003. Archaism and innovation in art from the New Kingdom to the twenty-sixth Dynasty. In: Tait, J. (ed.). *Never Had the Like Occurred: Egypt's View of its Past*. London: UCL Press, 79–99. **DIGITISED READING**, EGYPTOLOGY B 20 TAI, ISSUE DESK IOA TAI 2

Wilson, P. 2010. Consolidation, innovation, and renaissance. In: Wendrich, W. (ed.). *Egyptian Archaeology*. Malden, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 241–258. **E-BOOK**, EGYPTOLOGY A 6 WEN, IOA ISSUE DESK

10 (Re)constructing identities (CM)

'Ancient Egypt' is a unifying way to refer to something that was experienced very differently through time by different groups and individuals, depending on their social position, gender, age and ethnic affiliation. The strong appeal of Egyptian high culture within and outside the Egyptian heartland formed a resource for establishing shared identities as much as for articulating distinction.

This class explores issues of identification, i.e. of building identities, apropos the archaeological, historical and pictorial record of the Ptolemaic and Roman periods in Egypt. Ptolemaic-Roman Egypt offers a wealth of data to explore how groups and individuals carved their identities in a multicultural society. We will discuss the complex relationships between the processes of identification and the social and political contexts in which they arise and strategically situate themselves.

How people negotiated their ways of life and their positions vis à vis each other and within the wider realms of society has been a prominent field of research in the past two decades. Current contributions transcend earlier research which had a more static view of ethnicity and social hierarchy. When discussing how 'identity' has been conceptualised in archaeology, we will also shortly look into the history of the concept in the social sciences in general and survey Egyptological contributions to the topic relating to earlier periods of the Pharaonic past.

Essential reading

Diaz-Andreu, M. and S. Lucy 2005. Introduction. In: Diaz-Andreu, M. and S. Lucy (eds). *Archaeology of Identity: Approaches to Gender, Age, Status, Ethnicity, and Religion*. Routledge: London, 1–12. **E-BOOK**, INST ARCH AH DIA and ISSUE DESK DIA 8

Vandorpe, K. 2012. Identity in Roman Egypt. In: Riggs, C. (ed.). *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 260–276. **E-BOOK**, EGYPTOLOGY B 16 RIG

11 Modelling culture breaks: The appropriation of Christianity (CN)

The history of Egypt has been divided into several sequences characterised by a specific set of ideological or religious features: The transition from prehistory to Pharaonic Egypt, from Pharaonic to Hellenistic Egypt, from Hellenistic to Christian Egypt, from Christian to Arab Egypt, and from Medieval to modern Egypt, to name just some of the most common divisions being made. Periodisation of history needs a clear understanding of the purposes and criteria used and affords a model explaining the transition from one to another period. The break between Hellenistic and Christian Egypt, or the Roman and Byzantine period in Egypt, has been framed in Western academic tradition as the victory of Christianity over paganism. Recent research has rejected this interpretation due to its obvious eurocentrism and introduced an actor-based view on the Christianisation of Egypt.

This class will focus on the region of the First Cataract where pagan cults were in use longer than anywhere else in Egypt. We will evaluate the model of appropriation which is centred on the assumption that different actors integrated Christian symbols or customs in different ways into their mindset and chose deliberately among a variety of options, including Christian ones, those that suited them best.

Essential reading

Frijhoff, W. 1998. Foucault reformed by Certeau: Historical strategies of discipline and everyday tactics of appropriation, *Arcadia* 33, 92–108. **E-RESOURCE**