

CLE107
Ancient Egyptian Religion & Mythology
Teaching Block 2, 2003-2004



Tuesdays, 1-2
Faraday L
Thursdays, 9-10
Glyn Dwr D

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This module will provide an overview of Ancient Egyptian religion and mythology. The lessons will proceed both diachronically (covering the history of Egyptian religion through time) and synchronically (by topic). This course offers an introduction to the intellectual thought and religious life of Ancient Egypt, as well as an overview of the major deities and myths. Students will also learn how to overcome the particular problems inherent in studying an ancient civilization with no living witnesses.

There is one main textbook, that you must read in its entirety. This will be supplemented by Egyptian texts in translation, and other secondary literature that will be provided in class. It is important that you do the readings **BEFORE** the class session so that we can discuss them, and ask any questions you might have concerning them. This will not simply be a lecture class—your active participation in discussion groups during the class-time is expected. The Egyptians were dynamic, lively, and complex individuals and so too should you be. By the end of the module you will have learned how to approach the Egyptian religion in a scholarly yet sensitive way.

Assessment:

(All assessed elements must be completed. If you fail to submit an element, your mark for the course will be 0%.)

- Attendance and active participation in discussions is required.
- Online Quiz 27 April (includes brief definitions, identifications of major deities, iconography, and symbols).
- 25% will be based on an essay.
- 75% will be based on the final exam in June. The exam will include short answer questions, image and text interpretations, and a short essay.

Required texts:

David, Rosalie (2002) *Religion and Magic in Ancient Egypt*. London: Penguin Books.
 Hart, George (1986) *A Dictionary of Egyptian Gods and Goddesses*. London and New York: Routledge.

Syllabus and Readings:

Be sure to read the texts BEFORE the class session! Authors or works in italics refer to texts provided in your study pack.

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|----------|---|---|
| 1. 27/1 | Introduction | |
| 2. 29/1 | Sources, Definitions | (David, Chapter 1: 1-35) |
| 3. 5/2 | PreDynastic and Early Dynastic Religion; Cosmogonies | (David, Chapter 2: 37-76) |
| 4. 10/2 | Old Kingdom; Pyramid Texts; Rise of the Sun-God | (David, Chapter 3: 77-136) |
| 5. 12/2 | First Intermediate Period, Middle Kingdom; Coffin Texts | (David, Chapter 4: 137-177) |
| 6. 17/2 | Osiris & Horus; Time | |
| 7. 19/2 | New Kingdom; Amun and Kingship | (David, Chapter 5: 178-211) |
| 8. 24/3 | Amarna; Aten; Hymns | (David, Chapter 6: 212-245) |
| 26/2-3/3 | Seminars | Handouts (<i>Hymns to Amun and Aten</i>) |
| 9. 4/3 | Ramesside 'Personal Piety'; Prayers | (David, Chapter 7: 246-291) |
| 10. 9/3 | Deities & Demons (Video) | (Online: <i>Mertz</i>) |
| 11. 11/3 | Magic | (Online: <i>Spells</i>) |
| 12. 18/3 | Religion in Death; Funerary Rituals & Books of the Afterlife | (Online: <i>Funerary Texts</i>) |
| 13. 22/4 | Third Intermediate Period & Late Period; Divination & Oracles | (David, Chapter 8: 292-317) |
| 14. 29/4 | Hellenistic World; Isis, Serapis | (David, Chapter 9: 318-341) |
| 15. 4/5 | Coptic Survivals | (David, Chapter 9: 341-344) |

Essay Topics:

PLEASE read the guides for writing essays CAREFULLY (they are available on Blackboard under Course Material)! Plagiarism, incorrect citation of sources, and insufficient bibliographies can lead to a serious loss of marks. Note as well that in this module **internet sites are NOT AUTHORIZED as sources of information** (with the exception of the one website listed below). The vast majority are filled with misinformation, and will only lead you astray. Use the bibliography below as a start for researching your topic. If you need further help, do not hesitate to contact me.

ESSAY DUE DATES: Noon, either 3 March or 21 April.

1. Analyse the religious significance of either Sekhmet or Thoth. Focus on either their function or meaning in Egyptian religion at a specific time, or a particular attribute, or their associated rituals and cults. Be sure to make your thesis clear in the first paragraph of your essay.
2. Discuss the religious and symbolic significance of animals (choose either falcons (hawks) or rams).
3. You have been asked to design an exhibit of **five artefacts** on Ancient Egyptian Religion during a specific time period (Pre-Dynastic to Early Dynastic, Old Kingdom, Middle Kingdom, New Kingdom, Late Period, or Greco-Roman) at the Egypt Centre. Select five artefacts you would use, discuss why you chose them, what they reveal concerning the topic, and describe your plans.
4. Discuss the role of the dead in Ancient Egyptian medicine and magic. Be sure to cite specific spells, prescriptions, or practices to support your argument.
5. The architecture of temples reflects religious beliefs and ideologies. Compare and contrast the architecture of New Kingdom temples (excluding those of Amarna) with those of the Ptolemaic period.
6. Discuss the role of women in formal religious practices. You may either focus in detail on one time period, or analyze the changes through time relating to a specific practice.
7. Analyze and discuss the Hymn to Amun-Re on the votive stela of Nebre within the context of Ramesside 'personal piety.' Use one of the following translations:
 - The translation by Edward F. Wente Jr. in Simpson, William Kelly (ed.), (2003) *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An anthology of stories, instructions, stela, autobiographies, and poetry*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press: 284-286 (this has an excellent bibliography at the end).
 - The translation by Miriam Lichtheim in Lichtheim, Miriam (1976) *Ancient Egyptian Literature Vol II: The New Kingdom*. Berkeley: University of California Press: 105-107.

Bibliography

(There are many more books & journal articles which will be useful— this is just to give you a start. You will need to use 'Voyager', the library's online cataloguing system to locate the books. Note that some are available in the FOLIO section of the library. Some of the articles are available as PHOTOCOPIES in the library. If you cannot find a book, journal, or article, do ask a librarian for help.)

* = highly recommended for purchase

BOLD = first place to check for research!

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- Forman, W. and Quirke, S. (1996) *Hieroglyphs and the Afterlife in Ancient Egypt*. London: British Museum Press.
- Frankfort, H. a. H. A., Wilson, J. A., Jacobsen, T. and Irwin, W. A. (1946) *The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man*. Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press. [BL96 FRA]
- Freed, R. E., Markowitz, Y. J. and D'Auria, S. H. (eds.), (1999) *Pharaohs of the Sun: Akhenaten, Nefertiti, Tutankhamen*. Boston, New York, London: Bulfinch Press/Little, Brown and Company. [NB75 FRE Folios]
- Friedman, F. D. (1994) 'Aspects of Domestic Life and Religion', in *Pharaoh's Workers: the villagers of Deir el-Medina*. (ed., Lesko, L. H.), Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press: 95-117. [DT73.D47 PHA]
- Germond, P. (2001) *An Egyptian bestiary*. London: Thames & Hudson. [N5350 .GER (FOLIO)]
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Journals

- *Antiquity* CC1.A5
- *Göttinger Miszellen (GM)* DE1.G52
- *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology (JEA)* DE1.J21
- *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt (JARCE)* DE1.A26

- *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities (JSSEA)* DE1.J31
- *KMT* DE1.K44
- *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Abteilung Kairo (MDAIK)* DE1.D28
- *Revue d'Égyptologie (RdÉ)* DE1.R27

Websites

While you are encouraged to explore many sites on the internet, the **ONLY** one that you are allowed to consult as a reference for your essay is as follows:

The Petrie Museum's Site

<http://www.digitalegypt.ucl.ac.uk/>

NOTE: This module also has materials and resources available on its own internet environment in Blackboard. Online quizzes are available to help you test your understanding of the material. These are self-grading, and are not required, but many students note that using these quizzes help their understanding, which often results in a higher mark. There is also a bulletin board available for you to post questions or discuss various issues. This site will be active at the beginning of the teaching block, and those who are enrolled in the module will automatically have access to the site. The address is <http://bb.swan.ac.uk>