Khaled Abdel Ghany

After analysing and publishing the different motifs of the Celestial Cow, found on the cliff walls of the royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings and on the coffins of the 21st Dynasty, my conclusion is as follows: The first evolution features of the Celestial Cow scene did not emerge at the beginning of the Third Intermediate Period but rather earlier in the middle of the 20th Dynasty. Furthermore, in the New Kingdom the abridged image or reduced motif of the Celestial Cow also appeared in the Valley of the Kings, and this motif was an archetype for similar scenes that were found on the coffins of high priests and priestesses of Amun.

In consequence, during the 21st Dynasty a further evolution of different characteristic features took place and continued. These various distinct developments were illustrated by the variety of iconographic depictions of the Celestial Cow motifs during the 21st Dynasty. Evidently, in this era a new composition of religious iconography for the cosmology and the underworld was created.

Martin Bommas/Eman Khalifa

During what is referred to as the Early Intermediate Period (EIP; 3300–3150 BC), the process of state formation led to a diversity of material data, rather than simplification as previously thought. This development is reflected by the stratification of social groups whose access to sources defined their rank in society. While shallow bowls made of stone catered for exclusive mortuary meals with ancestor gods in the hidden chambers of mastaba tombs in the Memphite area, contemporary shallow bowls made of clay catered for levels of society who were deprived from accessing resources, infrastructure and production methods owned by the elite. In a combined approach to archaeological and written evidence, this article argues for the emergence of social stratification as the product of an intellectual process. Thus, Pyramid Texts provide a valuable insight in retrospect into the development of funerary rituals long before their Verschriftlichung. As the evidence from Tarkhan shows, newly developed funerary rituals catered both for the socialisation with elite gods identified by shallow bowls, while, at the same time, new strategies for a funerary cult were established, which involved offering dishes supplied by the living during funerary festivals. At the end of the Early Intermediate Period, actual mortuary meals were abandoned and reduced to a topos eagerly referred to by the Pyramid Texts, while a direct contact with the deceased became institutionalized and an integral part of religious practice.

Roberto Antonio Díaz Hernández

The aim of this paper is to show, by reference to Greek and Roman authors, that the Egyptian temple was considered “(immovable) cultural property” (I). It was particularly regarded as a monumental work of art in which the “cultural memory” of ancient Egyptians was preserved (II). It also served to safeguard the “movable cultural property” associated with the traditional wisdom of ancient Egypt, i.e. statues of historical figures, cult objects with a sacred meaning and manuscript collections (III). Egyptian priests, who formed the intellectual class of Egyptian society, were in charge of the preservation of this cultural heritage (IV). The conclusion to be reached is that Egyptian temples were
cultural centres for the preservation of the cultural-historical identity not unlike Mesopotamian, Greek and Roman temples (V).

Thomas L. Gertzen
In 1173 Benjamin of Tudela, of the Spanish kingdom of Navarre, wrote an account of his journeys through the Mediterranean into Mesopotamia, and about his return journey which supposedly took him around the Arabian Peninsula and via northeast Africa to Egypt and home. Although his "Book of Travels" has been dealt with extensively, this article intends to scrutinize his description of Fatimid Egypt – from Aswan to the Nile Delta and Sinai; its Jewish communities; trade connections; and ancient sites and monuments – and to assess its possible value as a source for the regional history of Egypt in medieval times as well as its alleged part in disciplinary "pre-history" of Egyptology.

Luisa-María García González/Ángel Rubio Salvador/Miguel-Cecilio Botella López/Alejandro Jiménez-Serrano
In the present paper, five burial sites found in the necropolis of Qubbet el-Hawa (Aswan, Egypt) are analyzed from different perspectives. All of them were originally located in an area beside the monumental funerary complex of Sarenput I, governor of the southernmost province of Egypt during the reign of Senusret I (12th Dynasty, 1939–1760 BC). The individuals were wrapped in linen cloths and placed in rectangular coffins. Apart from the presence of wooden coffins, the individuals were just buried with some pottery of varied typology. Only two beads were found on one individual. Physical types show differences in their ethnic group, which in the first instance rejects any kinship. They also show interesting infectious and degenerative diseases, indicating deficient living conditions. Each burial was excavated as a simple pit in the desert sand, stressing the different funerary traditions of this area in comparison with the rest of the necropolis.

Rudolf Haensch/Claudia Kreuzsaler
A sherd originally thought to have been produced in the ceramic workshops of Westerndorf St. Peter (Rosenheim, Bavaria) and currently in the Archäologische Staatssammlung in Munich, has now been identified as a Coptic ostracon bearing a tax receipt from the Egyptian village of Djeme. The receipt, dated to May 10th 726 AD, has been attributed to the scribe Johannes, son of Lazaros, who is known from multiple parallel documents. It records the payment of a trimesion for a tax payment vaguely described as stichoi made by Psyros, son of Elias, who is likewise known from other receipts. Research into the ostracan’s object biography led to the private collection of predominantly prehistoric artefacts assembled by HANS DIETL, a brewery and land owner from Baumburg, who lived around the turn of the 20th century. When the part of the Dietl collection of Bavarian provenance was purchased by the Archäologische Staatssammlung, the Coptic ostracan, misidentified in the inventory as ”early modern, Asian?” , apparently slipped into a crate of sherds from the Westerndorf site.

Stan Hendrickx/Xavier Droux/Merel Eyckerman/Rita Hartmann
A White Cross-lined jar, possibly from Abydos and dating to the Naqada I or early Naqada II Period, belongs to a very small group of vessels with complex figurative decoration. At first glance, the decoration of the jar seems to refer only to hunting as an aspect of elite behaviour; however, it is also to be considered in the context of political power and control by the elite, illustrating the earliest stages of state formation.

Clara Jeuthe/mit einem Beitrag von Mohamed A. Hamdan
During the last five years, more than 4000 chert artefacts from Elephantine Island have been studied. These come from a variety of excavation areas, and date from the end of the Early Dynastic Period to the late Middle Kingdom (approx. 2800 to 1700 BC). This on-going work focusses on the study of the
raw materials, for which petrographic analysis has been undertaken. The distribution of specific raw materials within individual settlement areas is of particular interest, as it helps to distinguish between diachronic and functional aspects. We also examine the relation between raw materials, blanks and tools and their provision in the town. The supply of imported blanks and finished tools versus local industries connects Elephantine Island with a range of networks and distribution systems in Egypt, indicating different levels of economic interaction with the state and local authorities.

Robert Kuhn
Vessel imitation is a very common, but until recently, not well studied phenomenon in Ancient Egyptian stone vessel production. Most of the objects can be attributed to the so-called high-culture, the elite of the Egyptian society. These objects are often interpreted as prestigious goods because of the raw-material used or the elaborate craftsmanship. Besides the often debated aspects of skeuomorphism, which does not seem to be a major factor in Egypt, and the copying of the environment, there are many other possibilities that must be kept in mind and studied in detail. Art and design of the material culture during the formative phase can be associated with many innovations and new ideas. In the canon of forms, which is immense, we see the interplay between different forms, materials, and characteristics, which are connected to certain raw materials. So possibly, all the different forms and productions of containers made of organic material, pottery, stone and metal influenced each other. On the other hand special characteristics of these different materials, such as e. g. their colour might also have had a certain impact. Besides the chronological point of view, it is therefore very hard to correlate the different imitations with specific aspects, and it will take many more studies to get closer to the original concept.

Corinna Rossi
This article contains a preliminary description of the results of the 2015 season of the Italian Archaeological Mission to Umm al-Dabadib (Kharga Oasis, Egypt’s Western Desert). As part of the project OASIS (Old Agricultural Sites and Irrigation Systems), the team completed the 3D survey of the fort with the addition of all the accessible internal spaces, and performed the exploration of a part of the only accessible subterranean aqueduct. During the survey operations, the team gained access to two new rooms at ground floor, which functioned as food storage. The 2015 additions allowed the creation of a 3D model of the fort that attained a precision of 3 mm, and is now being used to perform structural and metrological analyses.

Johanna Sigl/Peter Kopp/Dagmar Fritzsch
Since autumn 2013 the DAIK has launched new excavations in the Middle Kingdom town of Elephantine under the project title “Realities of Life”. In addition to the project aims defined in the 1960s, the current focus of the scientific work is on reconstructing the living conditions on the island. To achieve this, the implementation of methods derived from natural sciences – archaeometry – is an integral part of the research work. Apart from a detailed description of the methodological framework of the project, preliminary results of the fieldwork of the seasons 2013/2014 (43rd season) and 2014/2015 (44th season) are given in the following contribution.

Tarek Tawfik/Susanna Thomas/Ina Hegenbarth-Reichardt
During the preparation for the exhibition in the Tutankhamun Galleries at the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM) new evidence occurred for Tutankhamun’s parents. The recent examination of the box strip with royal names, sequins from a robe and a previously untouched decayed tunic suggests a new interpretation of the family relationships at the post-Amarna Period, including a new approach for the identification of the shadowy king/queen Ankhkheperure.
Leslie Anne Warden, Eman Khalifa, John Gait, Peter Kopp and Valerie Steele

Part of the new focus of the archaeological work in the scope of the sub-project “Realities of Life” on Elephantine Island is a detailed analysis of pottery remains. Additional to the general assessment for dating and use purposes by preserved ware and clay types, questions are addressed as to the actual functionality of vessels in the daily life of ancient Egyptians. The following contribution is outlining the methodological approach to the study of pottery remains, which are excavated in the north-western town quarters of the Middle Kingdom city of Elephantine.

Coverbild: siehe Anhang

Verlag: Harrassowitz