

**AR/CL 748**  
**Gods, Graves & Pyramids:**  
**Ancient Egyptian Religion & Ritual**

Spring 2020  
Tue., Thur. 11:00 am-12:15 pm  
CAS 203  
Discussion class: to be scheduled

Prof. Kathryn Bard  
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Office hours: Tue. 12:30-1:30 pm, and Thur. 5:00-6:00 pm (or by appointment)

**Course Description**

The ancient Egyptians created monumental evidence of their belief systems, relating to both state religion and the mortuary cult. This course examines ancient Egyptian religion from the evidence of tombs, both royal and private, as well as the temple – all of which evolved over the course of 3,000 years of the pharaonic state. Additionally, hieroglyphic texts associated with these monuments will be studied in translation. These texts not only greatly expand what is known about ancient Egyptian beliefs, but also inform about the rituals that were practiced within Egyptian temples and tomb complexes. The purpose of this course is to provide a better understanding of the beliefs of the ancient Egyptians, from their origins in Predynastic and Early Dynastic times to the development of the great temple complexes in the New Kingdom and later, based on a broad synthesis of the data: archaeological, architectural and textual. This course also looks at archaeological and textual evidence that relates to the individual and personal beliefs in ancient Egypt, outside the contexts of state religion and the major cults – including the shrines and stelae recently excavated at the Middle Kingdom harbor of Mersa/Wadi Gawasis.

Course content includes the ancient Egyptian worldview – one that is often misrepresented today as being dominated by a culture of death and the afterlife. Students will have the opportunity to analyze ancient Egyptian artifacts in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in terms of what can be inferred about artistic criteria in the context of the belief system. Through papers and oral class presentations, students will integrate images (archaeological artifacts, paintings and reliefs, structures and monuments, and maps/plans) and texts (in translation), into their analyses.

**Course Webpage**

The syllabus and some assigned readings can be found on the course website on Blackboard Learn. A **writing guide** for research papers in Archaeology is also on this website.

**Classes**

This class is taught in lectures and questions are welcome in class. An extra class each week is also scheduled for graduate student discussions.

You are expected to attend all classes, as images and new material are presented in class which are not always available in the assigned texts and readings. Reading assignments are to be done before the relevant lectures. Use of smart phones is not permitted in class, and laptops can only be used to take notes.

Absences from lectures (due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances) should be discussed with me to determine how the missed work can be completed, and you are responsible for emailing me about the absence.

Class accommodations for students with documented disabilities: if you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the Office for Disability Services (ODS) at 617 353-3658 to coordinate any reasonable accommodation requests.

### **Grading**

Progress throughout the course will be assessed by written papers. Grades will be based on class discussion (10%), the three shorter papers (20% each), a class PowerPoint presentation (5%) and the 10-12 page research paper (25%).

### **Paper Requirements**

Student essays will be shared in the discussion class and discussed in terms of the students' understanding of different concepts in ancient Egyptian religion and how those concepts relate to the evidence.

Paper 1, 5-6 pages: Using your assigned readings and other relevant references, write about the role of one aspect of ancient Egyptian religion (i.e., kingship, cults of the gods, mortuary cult) and its role in the state.

Paper 1 is due on Feb. 6.

Paper 2, 5-6 pages: Using your assigned readings and other relevant references, discuss an artifact in the MFA Egyptian galleries in terms of inferences that can be made from it about ancient Egyptian beliefs and how artistic criteria relate to these beliefs.

Paper 2 is due on March 5.

Paper 3, 5-6 pages: Using your assigned readings and other relevant references, discuss how much of a heresy was Akhenaten's new religion.

Paper 3 is due on Apr. 7.

Paper 4, 10-12 pages: A research paper of your choice of topic.

Paper 4 is due on Apr. 30. Students are encouraged to submit paper outlines with working bibliographies before the paper is due.

The paper topic should focus on some aspect of ancient Egyptian religion, using archaeological data as the primary evidence, with relevant textual evidence when appropriate. Paper topics should be chosen in consultation with me. A **writing guideline** is on the course website, and papers are to be researched in Mugar, the Theology Library and the Stone Science Library. References found on the

www. are not acceptable for research, unless approved by me, since much information there has never been peer-reviewed.

Plagiarism, including any reference that is not properly footnoted, is a serious offense. Papers may not be bought or copied from anyone else. You are responsible for handing in your own essays on time, and late essays will be marked down one grade for each week late.

### **Class Presentation**

A 15-20 minute classroom presentation in PowerPoint, based on your research paper topic, will be scheduled for the last week of classes. The presentation should include a written abstract and outline, to be handed out in class.

### **Academic Integrity**

The GRS Academic and Professional Conduct Code will be followed in the event that academic misconduct occurs. Students should refer to the GRS policy on misconduct (<http://bu.edu/cas/files/2017/02/GRS-Academic-Conduct-Code-Final.pdf>).

### **Textbooks** (available in the Barnes & Noble B.U. Bookstore

Required:

Bard, Kathryn A.

2015 *An Introduction to the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt*. Malden, MA & Oxford: Blackwell Wiley.

Teeter, Emily

2012 *Religion and Ritual in Ancient Egypt*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wilkinson, Toby

2007 *The Egyptian World*. London & New York: Routledge.

### **Other Course Readings**

Assigned readings listed below not from the textbooks are available on the course Blackboard Learn site.

### **Class Schedule**

Week 1: Jan. 21 & 23

Topic: Introduction to ancient Egyptian belief systems. The study of religion.

Readings:

Bard 2015: pp. 38-56.

Kyriakidis, Evangelos. 2007. "Finding Ritual: Calibrating the Evidence." In *The Archaeology of Ritual*, E. Kyriakidis, ed. Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, University of California, Los Angeles, pp. 9-22.

Teeter 2012: pp. 1-15.

Trigger, B. G. 2003. "Conceptions of the Supernatural." In *Understanding Early Civilizations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp 409-443.

Wilkinson, T. 2007: pp. 7-72.

#### Week 2: Jan. 28 & 30

##### Topic:

Background to ancient Egyptian culture, geography & chronology. An overview of ancient Egyptian religion, including state religion of the god-king and cults of polytheistic deities. Afterlife beliefs.

##### Readings:

Eaton, Katherine. 2013. *Ancient Egyptian Temple Ritual*. New York & London: Routledge, pp. 1-17.

Harrington, Nicola. 2013. "The Nature of the Deceased: Constituent Parts, Character, and Iconography." In *Living with the Dead. Ancestor Worship and Mortuary Ritual in Ancient Egypt*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, pp. 1-27.

Ikram, Salima. 2015. "Funerals, Mortuary Cults, the Living, and the Dead," *Death and Burial in Ancient Egypt*. Cairo & New York: American University in Cairo Press, pp. 183-201.

Redford, Donald B., ed. 2002 "Cults." *The Ancient Gods Speak. A Guide to Egyptian Religion*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 61-91.

#### Week 3: Feb. 4 & 6

Topic: The Gods. A survey of the Egyptian pantheon of gods, goddesses and lesser deities.

Paper 1 due on Feb. 6.

##### Readings:

Frankfort, Henri. 1948. "The Egyptian Gods." *Ancient Egyptian Religion. An Interpretation*. New York: Harper & Row, pp. 3-29.

Lesko, Leonard. 1991. "Ancient Egyptian Cosmogonies and Cosmology." In *Religion in Ancient Egypt*, B. E. Schafer, ed. Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, pp. 88-122.

Mailer, Norman. 1983. *Ancient Evenings*. Boston & Toronto: Little, Brown & Co., pp. 41-50.

Silverman, David P. 1991. "Concepts of the Divine", "The Gods." In *Religion in Ancient Egypt*, B. E. Schafer, ed. Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, pp. 9-58.

Wilkinson, Richard H. 2003. *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt*. New York: Thames & Hudson, pp. 12-39; 70-73; 86-89.

Week 4: Feb. 11 & 13

Topic: Kingship and ancient Egyptian religion. State religion and the role of the god-king.

Readings:

Bard, 2015: pp. 135-136.

Frankfort, Henri. 1978. *Kingship and the Gods*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 36-47, 148-161, 181-212.

Kemp, Barry J. 2006. *Ancient Egypt. Anatomy of a Civilization*. London & New York: Routledge, pp. 261-264.

Silverman, David P. 1991. "Kingship and Divinity." In *Religion in Ancient Egypt*, B. E. Schafer, ed. Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, pp. 58-87.

Wilkinson, Richard H. 2003. *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt*. New York: Thames & Hudson, pp. 54-67.

Wilkinson, T. 2007: pp. 275-295.

Week 5: Feb. 18 & 20

NO CLASS on Feb. 18

Feb 20: Visit to the Museum of Fine Arts Egyptian collection

Meet at the Museum of Fine Arts, Fenway entrance at 3:30 pm (earlier if by agreement).

Topic: Visit to the MFA Egyptian collection & mummification. The class will meet at the MFA to discuss Egyptian and Nubian artifacts in this collection relating to cult activities and mortuary beliefs, including the process of mummification.

Readings:

Ikram, Salima. 2015. "Funerary Equipment and Provisioning for the Dead," *Death and Burial in Ancient Egypt*. Cairo & New York: American University in Cairo Press, pp. 95-137.

Taylor, John H. 2001. "The Eternal Body: Mummification," "Provisioning the Dead." *Death and the Afterlife in Ancient Egypt*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 46-111.

Week 6: Feb. 25 & 27

Topic: The Cult Temple. Origins of the cult temple and its evolving role through three millennia, including the "animal cults" of the Late & Ptolemaic Periods.

Readings:

Bard 2015: pp. 254-264.

Ikram, Salima. 2015. "Animal Mummies," *Death and Burial in Ancient Egypt*. Cairo & New York: American University in Cairo Press, pp. 77-93.

Kemp, Barry J. 2006. *Ancient Egypt. Anatomy of a Civilization*. London & New York: Routledge, pp. 111-160; 247-260.

Wilkinson, Richard H. 2000. *The Complete Temples of Ancient Egypt*. New York: Thames & Hudson, pp. 54-79.

Wilkinson, T. 2007: pp. 310-324.

#### Week 7: March 3 & 5

Topic: The Cult Temple, priesthood and ritual. Operation of the cult temple by a hierarchy of priests and other personnel involved in both ritual and economic activities surrounding the cult.

Paper 2 due on March 5.

#### Readings:

Cauville, Sylvie. 2012. *Offerings to the Gods in Egyptian Temples*. Leuven-Paris-Walpole, MA: Peeters, pp. 22-88.

Eaton, Katherine. 2013. *Ancient Egyptian Temple Ritual*. New York & London: Routledge, pp. 57-75.

Kemp, Barry J. 2006. *Ancient Egypt. Anatomy of a Civilization*. London & New York: Routledge, pp. 264-281.

Renfrew, Colin. 2007. "The Archaeology of Ritual, of Cult, and of Religion." In *The Archaeology of Ritual*, E. Kyriakidis, ed. Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, University of California, Los Angeles. pp. 109-122.

Teeter 2012: pp. 16-75.

Wilkinson, T. 2007: pp. 105-117.

#### SPRING BREAK March 10 & 12

#### Week 8: March 17 & 19

Topic: Akhenaten: the heretic king. The Amarna "revolution": a brief period in the 14<sup>th</sup> century BC when traditional state religion was ignored by the promotion of the cult of the god Aten. Discussion of the "Hymn to the Aten."

Readings:

Bard 2015: pp. 240-247.

Kemp, Barry. 2012. *The City of Akhenaten and Nefertiti. Amarna and Its People*. London: Thames & Hudson, pp. 14-45.

*Old Testament, Psalm 104.*

Simpson, William Kelly, ed. 1973. *The Literature of Ancient Egypt. An Anthology of Stories, Instructions and Poetry*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, pp. 289-299.

Redford, D.B. 1984. *Akhenaten. The Heretic King*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 57-153.

Teeter 2012: pp. 182-196.

Week 9: March 24 & 26

Topic: Akhetaten: the city of Akhenaten. A look at the archaeological and monumental evidence at Tell el-Amarna and how this city reflects the Atenist cult.

Readings:

Arnold, Dorothea. 1996. "The Workshop of the Sculptor Thutmose." In *The Royal Women of Amarna*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, pp. 41-83.

Kemp, Barry. 2012. *The City of Akhenaten and Nefertiti. Amarna and Its People*. London: Thames & Hudson, pp. 78-143.

Week 10: March 31, Apr. 2

Topic: Death: the King. A survey of royal burial monuments, from the Predynastic Tomb U-j at Abydos, to the 1<sup>st</sup> Dynasty kings' burials at Abydos, to the pyramids of the Old and Middle Kingdoms, and the later hidden royal burials in the Valley of the Kings in Western Thebes, as well as the 21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> royal burials at Tanis.

Paper 3 due on Apr. 2.

Readings:

Bard 2015: 140-156, 166-170, 190-193, 198-202, 264-270; 294-296.

Dreyer, Günter. 2011. "Tomb U-j: A royal Burial of Dynasty 0 at Abydos." In *Before the Pyramids. The Origins of Egyptian Civilization*, E. Teeter, ed. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, pp. 131-136.

Lehner, Mark. 1997. *The Complete Pyramids*. London: Thames & Hudson, pp. 6-35.

O'Connor, David. 2009. *Abydos. Egypt's First Pharaohs and the Cult of Osiris*. London: Thames & Hudson, pp. 136-181.

Reeves, Nicholas, & Richard H. Wilkinson. 2005. *The Complete Valley of the Kings*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, pp. 88-149.

Week 11: April 7 & 9

Topic: Death: non-royal. An overview of the hierarchy of non-royal burials, beginning with the Predynastic Naqada culture, and from the Early Dynastic Period through the New Kingdom.

Readings:

Bard 2015: pp. 99-110; 125-129; 160-165, 192-193; 206-207; 270-275; 278-281.

Bard, Kathryn A. 1992. "Toward an interpretation of the role of ideology in the evolution of complex society in Egypt." *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 11: 1-24.

Meskell, Lynn. 1999. "Archaeologies of life and death," *American Journal of Archaeology* 103: 181-199.

Teeter 2012: pp. 119-160.

Wilkinson, T. 2007: pp. 340-351.

Week 12: Apr. 14 & 16

Topic: Egyptian religion and Nubia. A look at the evidence of Egyptian religion and cults outside Egypt in Nubia, and the sometimes hybrid mix of beliefs that developed there.

Readings:

Ambridge, L. 2007. Inscripting the Napatan Landscape: Architecture and Royal Identity. In *Negotiating the Past in the Past. Identity, Memory, and Landscape in Archaeological Research*, N. Yoffee, ed. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, pp. 128-154.

Bard 2015: 296-302, 338-344.

Fisher, Marjorie M., P. Lacovara, S. Ikram & S. D'Auria, eds. 2012. *Ancient Nubia. African Kingdoms on the Nile*. Cairo & New York: American University in Cairo Press, pp. 84-153.

Welsby, D. A. 1996. *The Kingdom of Kush. The Napatan and Meroitic Empires*. London: British Museum Press, pp. 72-123.

Week 13: Apr. 21 & 23

Topic: Hieroglyphs: sacred writing. The writing system that was invented in Egypt, and its use in royal and cultic contexts. Origins of writing and early mortuary texts.

Readings:

Bard 2015: pp. 25-36.



Davies, W. V. 1987. *Egyptian Hieroglyphs*. London: British Museum Publications, pp. 6-29.

Erman, Adolf. 1966. *The Ancient Egyptians. A Sourcebook of Their Writings*, translated by A. M. Blackman. New York: Harper & Row, pp. 2-12.

Forman, Werner, & Stephen Quirke. 1996. "Hieroglyphic Script and Art." In *Hieroglyphs and the Afterlife in Ancient Egypt*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, pp. 7-33.

Lehner, Mark. 1997. *The Complete Pyramids*. London: Thames & Hudson, pp. 28-33.

Parkinson, R. B. 1991. *Voices from Ancient Egypt. An Anthology of Middle Kingdom Writings*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, pp. 117-120, 131-146.

Stauder, Andrés. 2010. "The Earliest Egyptian Writing." In *Visible Language. Inventions of Writing in the Ancient Middle East and Beyond*. C. Woods, ed., with E. Teeter & G. Emberling. Chicago: University of Chicago. The Oriental Institute Museum Publications No. 32, pp. 37-47.

#### Week 14: Apr. 28 & 30

Topic: Some of the major mortuary texts of the New Kingdom royal tombs, as well as some non-royal mortuary texts such as the *Book of the Dead*.

Personal beliefs. A look at archaeological and textual evidence that relates to individual and personal beliefs in ancient Egypt, outside the contexts of state religion and the major cults.

PowerPoint presentations on Apr. 28 & 30.

Paper 4 due on Apr. 30.

#### Readings:

Baines, John. 1991. "Society, Morality, and Religious Practice." In *Religion in Ancient Egypt*, B. E. Schafer, ed. Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, pp. 123-200.

Bard, Kathryn A., and Rodolfo Fattovich. 2018. "Interpreting Ideology at Saww: Ritual Practices, Memorial Shrines, and Commemorative Stelae," *Seafaring Expeditions to the Land of Punt in the Middle Kingdom: Excavations at Mersa/Wadi Gawasis, Egypt*. Leiden & Boston: Brill, pp. 126-155.

Faulkner, Raymond O. 1990. *Book of the Dead*. Austin: University of Texas Press, pp. 11-16, 27-61.

Kemp, Barry. 2012. "Spiritual Life at Amarna," *The City of Akhenaten and Nefertiti. Amarna and Its People*. London: Thames & Hudson, pp. 230-263.

Taylor, John H. 2001. "Magic and Ritual for the Dead." In *Death and the Afterlife in Ancient Egypt*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 186-200.